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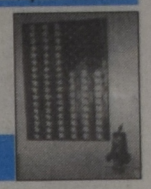

57th year of publication

Strike is a bump on the road of publicly funded Christian Schools

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JESSIE SCHUT

Kindergarten teacher Marina VandeGriend (right) welcomes Melissa Wilk (and her dad Steve) back to Edmonton Christian School's west campus after a 13 day absence.

Jessie Schut

EDMONTON — When the Edmonton Society for Christian Education (ESCE) became an alternative, publicly funded program of the Edmonton Public School Board (EPSB) in the spring of 1999, members knew that they were taking a risk. All public and separate school teachers must, by law, belong to the Alberta Teacher's Association (ATA) which represents teachers in labor negotiations. In the event of strike action by the ATA, Christian school teachers would be obliged to walk out.

But most members were hoping that the worst wouldn't happen. Edmonton's last major public school strike had been 1978, when 4,000 teachers walked out for 21 days before being ordered back to work.

The worst did happen

In November 2001, however, members of the ATA voted overwhelmingly for strike action to back their demands. They were seeking more funding to improve classroom conditions and to increase salaries to address the impending teaching shortage (See "What the strike's all about," p. 3).

On February 4, the worst did happen: almost 21,000 teachers, including 61 Edmonton Christian School staff, walked out of their classrooms. More than 350,000 children in 22 school districts across Alberta (1020 of them students at ECS) had an unscheduled vacation until their teachers were ordered back to work Feb. 22.

See **TEACHERS** *page 2...*

Agencies urge Christians to share faith with Jews

Alan Doerksen

TORONTO — Although some Christians feel Jews don't need the Gospel to be saved, two ministries to Jews are encouraging Canadian Christians to share their faith with Jews.

Chosen People Ministries (CPM) and Jews for Jesus (J4J) both use various means to evangelize Jews and encourage other Christians to do the same.

During the Lent and Easter season, CPM often sends guest speakers to churches to explain the meaning of Passover, and to present Passover banquets. In their presentations, CPM staff explain how Jesus fits into the Jewish concept of "Messiah," and help Christians to explore the Jewish roots of their faith. "Passover is fulfilled in the Lord's Supper," explains Rev. Lawrence Rich, CPM's Canadian director.

Rich often speaks at evangelical churches on Sundays and at special events. Last year, he spoke at several Christian Reformed Churches, including Hagersville Community CRC. Its minister, Barton Velthuizen, says Rich has visited his church several times to preach or to present a Passover supper (*seder*). The church has enjoyed these occasions, but Velthuizen explains that the church does not have a special interest in outreach to Jews. "It's not like we have a Jewish community in our area."

COURTESY JEWS FOR JESUS

Andrew Barron, Canadian director of Jews for Jesus, speaks to interested people at a recent MissionFest.

No exception clause

Velthuizen suggests that churches could be doing more outreach to Jews and other groups. But he says some Christians believe Jews don't need the Christian Gospel to be saved. "Somehow, we feel closer to Jews than to Muslims... and feel the Jews may be saved and the Muslims not." Velthuizen observes.

But Andrew Barron, Canadian director of J4J, rejects that idea. "I think that's an insult to the Scriptures. You're saying Christ's death on the cross has an exception clause. You can't make an exception for Jewish people."

Rich believes Canadian churches are doing very little outreach to Jews. "They're barely scraping the surface," he asserts. Christians offer several excuses for this, he says, such as: "The Jews have suffered enough in the name of Christianity," or "I don't

See **CHURCHES** *page 2...*

News

Teachers, parents wrestle with issues connected with public system

... *continued from page 1*

The action by Christian school teachers was not taken without serious consideration. ESCE Board members, principals and teachers consulted with the EPSB, ATA officials, and with CLAC staff about their options. They were told that if Christian school teachers opted out, they might jeopardize the agreement with EPSB, as well as risk stiff penalties from the ATA.

Un-Christian to belong to union

In a letter sent to the parents January 30, school board chairperson Joanne Munro wrote, "A few parents have indicated the Board should insist our teachers not strike ... [that] it is un-Christian to belong to a union and to participate fully in union activity. The school's supporting community is by no means unanimous on these issues, nor are its teachers.... It would be fundamentally unfair to ask our teachers to risk their jobs and face repercussions from the ATA when we do not ask the same of other unionized Society members.

Goodwill in jeopardy

"Many excellent relationships have been forged with EPS administrators and teachers over the past three years. Much of that goodwill would be lost if ECS teachers refused to strike."

"We talked about the lose-lose situation," says Brian Doornenbal, a teacher at West Campus. "It seemed clear to us while it was not a great situation, on this issue we needed to abide by our obligation to the ATA."

Many teachers felt an ethical and moral conflict about leaving their students, and did what they could to minimize the impact. Some prepared homework packages in advance, although the ATA had directed them not to do so. Some phoned their children at home to keep in touch. Some volunteered in the society offices in their role as parents.

Generally, the Edmonton Christian School community responded well to the strike, which, according to Dan Vander Ark, executive director of Christian Schools International, is unprecedented amongst CSI's 80-year history.

Preparing supporters for strike

ESCE's Board prepared the society by sending out letters of support to teachers and informational packages to the supporting community, hosting parent meetings, and establishing a job action committee. As a result, when the strike did happen, Board officers said they received very few phone calls or e-mails expressing negative feelings on the issue.

"Parents seem to be sympathetic to teachers," says Karen Wilk, mother of three children at ECS West campus. "I haven't heard anyone say that we should never have joined the Public Schools in the first place."

One parent with a different viewpoint was Tony Vander Meer, PC MLA representing Edmonton Manning. He is also a parent of two children in the system. He was one of 25 per cent of members who voted against the agreement with EPSB in 1999. "I'm in favor of education money following the student, and every chance I get, I speak up for independent schools," he says. "Our Christian schools gave up their independence [when we joined the public system] and now we have to live with the consequences. We should be working harder to get more Christian people elected so we can get better funding and keep our independence."

Still, it seems that most ESCE families are feeling that the benefits of being part of the public system outweigh the weaknesses. Board president Joanne Munro listed the benefits in a letter to parents: lower program fees that allow many more children to access Christian education; increased enrolment of 250 students; increased credibility and understanding within educational circles; access to many more resources; opportunity to develop a Bible curriculum that will be adopted by EPSB; bringing a Christian viewpoint to EPSB and ATA discussions; and a greater diversity in the school community (72 churches are now represented).

"The strike has been a bump on the road, and not a small one," says Doornenbal. "But the agreement has forced us as a school into some close self-examination, for which we were due. We're a better school for it now."

And school support seems not to have waned. Because of increased enrolment, last year the Society approved a $5 million dollar expansion, which has already collected $1.3 million.

Churches should do more outreach to Jews, say agencies

... *continued from page 1*

know what to say. I don't want to offend."

But Rich says, "People should not be intimidated by a negative response." CPM helps Christians overcome obstacles to evangelizing Jews, with seminars, books, tracts and tapes.

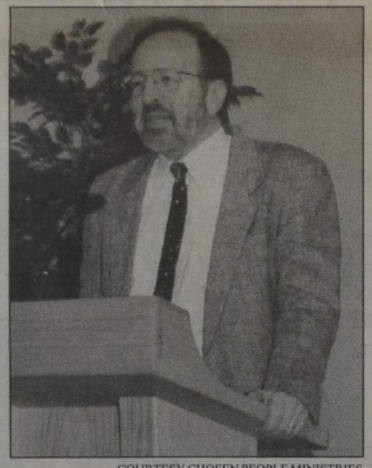
Two different approaches

Jews for Jesus "started as part of our ministry and became a separate ministry," says Rich. J4J started as an outreach to hippies, and is now very focused on tracts and street-level ministry, he explains. In contrast, CPM has "more of a family, suburban orientation — more church-planting than tract distributing." Occasionally, CPM works together with J4J on projects.

Comparing the two agencies, Barron says, "Our focus really is on evangelism." The agencies have "a different philosophy of ministry, but the same goal in mind.

"We do street evangelism, multi-media evangelism, personal evangelism...." Besides this, he notes, "In Canada, we have a very fruitful ministry on the Internet.... We have regular chat-rooms we monitor." The success in that area connects with the Canadian preference for a private approach to religion, observes Barron.

Like CPM, J4J also has Passover presentations. For instance, this April 6, J4J will present a



COURTESY CHOSEN PEOPLE MINISTRIES

Rev. Lawrence Rich, Chosen People Ministries' Canadian director, speaks at a service.

Passover banquet at Tyndale College and Seminary in Toronto. But these are not limited to the Easter season. "We do them throughout the year," explains Barron.

J4J focuses mainly on "encouraging Christians to witness to Jewish neighbors and friends," explains Barron. Many churches call the agency asking for speakers. "We're recognized quite generally across the church spectrum," says Barron. Not all churches who call are in heavily-Jewish areas, he notes. "Christians across the spectrum have burdens for a particular people group."

Barron has visited several CRCs, and observes that some Christians from Dutch background have a strong interest in outreach to Jews. This is "because of World War 2," he says. During that time, many Dutch families harbored Jews from the Nazis.

Obstacles to witnessing

As a transplanted American working in Toronto, Barron observes, "My impression, generally, is that Canadians are less likely to share their faith with Jews than other places. I think most of that has to do with fear of offending or being intolerant." But he adds, "There are Jews coming to Christ all the time in Canada" — often as a result of Christian friends.

Other obstacles Christians face in sharing their faith with Jews include "fear of not having enough information ... [or] fear their testimony isn't dramatic enough."

On its website, the agency explains, "We are one of the few mission agencies with organized opposition. Most Jews would be just as pleased if we would disappear and allow them to keep on ignoring what God wants all people to know. But, in a sense, this opposition is a tribute to our effectiveness."

The J4J website (**www.jewsforjesus.ca**) offers opportunities for interaction, and answers frequently-asked questions such as, "Why emphasize witnessing to Jews?"

The agency responds, "Most of us Jews grow up with the belief that Jesus is not an option for us. The missiological term for that is 'gospel resistant.' In other words, it takes a whole lot to bring my people to a place where they allow themselves to consider the gospel.... Jews for Jesus is committed to presenting opportunities that Jewish people cannot dismiss as being 'for Gentiles only.'"

J4J argues, "If a person believes the Bible and believes that Jesus is the only way of salvation and then that person declines to tell a Jewish friend about Christ, it indicates one of two things. Either that person has decided that the Jews are not worthy of the gospel, in which case he would be a racist, an anti-Semite and a hater of people instead of the lover of people that God wants him to be. Or perhaps he has judged the gospel as being unworthy of the Jews in which case he has trivialized the passion of Calvary and the awesome significance of Christ's resurrection. It is imperative that the church take a stand for Jewish evangelism."

CPM also has an extensive website (**www.chosenpeople.com**) which mentions, "CPM brings the message of the Messiah to the Jewish community utilizing the most modern of communication tools — yet the core of our outreach is still person to person, heart to heart."

The CPM website mentions some other obstacles which keep Jews from becoming Christians, such as:

- Jewish people cannot comprehend how a person can be a Jew and a Christian at the same time. They presume that if they accept Jesus they can no longer be Jewish.
- Jewish people are taught to reject certain essential teachings of the Bible such as the Trinity, the deity of the Messiah, and the Second Coming of Jesus.

To reach out effectively to Jews, CPM suggests Christians consider these ideas:

Use the Bible: The Scriptures tell us that faith comes through hearing the Word of God (see Romans 10:17). Sometimes, because Jewish people are not familiar with the New Testament or even with the Old, we tend to use reason and logic more than God's Word. The Bible has self-authenticating authority that can touch hearts.

Present a Person: Don't be discouraged when your friend rejects Christianity. There is often much historical baggage involved. Just remember: the Gospel is about a Person: Jesus the Messiah. It is about a relationship, not a religion. When you distinguish between Jesus and the Jewish understanding of the Christian religion, many objections dissipate.

CPM suggests, "Your Jewish friend does not need to feel that by accepting Jesus he is giving up his Jewish identity. You are not asking him to 'convert' to another religion, but to become 'complete' by receiving the Jewish Messiah."

News

What the strike's all about

Jessie Schut

EDMONTON — The back-to-work order issued by the Alberta government has not resolved the underlying dispute between teachers and local boards. They were given till March 15 to come to an agreement, after which disputes will go to a one-man tribunal for binding arbitration.

Restrictive legislation

One factor contributing to Alberta Teachers Association's dissatisfaction is a 1995 move by the Alberta government that took away the right of school boards to collect their own revenues. Legislation also prohibits school boards from running deficits, so school boards are limited to provincial parameters in negotiations with teachers.

In its April 2001 budget, the government gave school boards money enough for a six per cent salary increase over two years for teachers, and a 6.5 per cent increase over two years in basic grants. ATA point out that doctors, nurses and MLAs received much greater salary increases in the past year. School boards wishing to enhance teacher's salaries beyond the six per cent would have to take money out of grants that are meant to improve classroom conditions.

Schools never recovered

Other factors included a five per cent salary cutback and cuts in funding in the early '90s from which, the teachers say, schools and staff have never recovered. "When enrolment increases and inflation are taken into account, Alberta is spending less on public education today than it did in 1992/93," states an ATA bulletin. According to Statistics Canada data, "Alberta spends about $500 less per child per year on education than the national average and almost $1,000 less than Ontario."

While most Christian school teachers could not relate to the ATA's demands for radically higher salaries, many did have sympathy with the union's position on education funding. "Before we became an alternative public school, we didn't spend a lot of time getting involved in the public arena," says Doornenbal. "A lot of energy was spent just keeping our own community afloat. But now, we are involved."

Issues need to be addressed

What teachers see is larger class sizes, a greater awareness of the needs of children who are learning challenged, more children identified with special needs, and an ever-greater pressure to achieve, he says. "These are issues that need to be addressed. It's a silly when the government is tying the hands of the school boards."

Tony Vander Meer, a PC MLA for Manning East in Edmonton with two children in the Christian school, disagrees that the government is underfunding education. Education and Health are now taking up the biggest chunk of the government's budget, he says, while other areas, such as transportation and infrastructure are hurting. "We'd all like more money," he says. "When the teachers get their six per cent raise, they will be among the best-paid teachers in Canada with the lowest cost of living."

JESSIE SCHUT

Melissa Wilk is very happy to be back in kindergarten at Edmonton Christian School's west campus after 13 days at home during the teacher's strike.

No love lost

He also sees that to some degree the labour unrest is caused by animosity between teachers and government. There's no love lost between the Alberta government and the ATA. While on a trade mission in Japan earlier in February, Premier Ralph Klein compared the workday of an Alberta teacher to that of a Japanese counterpart, saying, "instead of working four or five hours a day, she [a Japanese teacher] works eight hours a day." "It's almost as if the premier is deliberately trying to antagonize teachers," observed ATAs president Larry Booi.

Animosity has to go

"That animosity has to go," Vander Meer says. "We have to get it so we work together, that we are not always butting heads."

As for Edmonton Christian Schools, the Board is urging parents to continue praying for the situation, to support their teachers, and to write letters expressing their feelings to both the government and the ATA.

"The way in which we deal with this conflict will say much about our community," says the ESCE Board in a letter to parents. "A willingness to listen and respect each other's points of view will minimize the strife created by this strike."

Zimbabwean Christians rebuke state media

HARARE, Zimbabwe (Zenit.org) — A group of 17 Christian churches issued a statement denouncing violence and warning the state-sponsored media to stop demonizing its leaders as puppets of foreign governments and institutions.

The Bulawayo-based group included the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Word for Life, Apostolic Faith, Evangelical Lutheran, and Presbyterian churches. Their warning comes as this southern African nation of 11.3 million braces for presidential elections next month.

State media reported that the government has set up a task force headed by its feared intelligence chief to distribute emergency food imports, the Associated Press said. Opposition leaders said they feared that the move meant that food would be used as a tool to help President Robert Mugabe win the hard-fought-for elections scheduled for March 9-10.

State permission needed for public prayers

Representatives of the Christian churches said they were concerned at Parliament's approval of the Public Order and Security Act, which requires them to seek state permission to hold prayers in public.

The Chronicle newspaper accused Catholic Archbishop Pius Ncube of Bulawayo of politicizing the Church by turning his sermons into "political rallies."

The churches also denounced the current culture of violence sweeping across the country. "We deplore, in the strongest terms, that it is acceptable to beat, rape, torture, harass and intimidate people going about their legitimate business," they said.

The churches also expressed their solidarity with the families of those killed, injured, maimed and molested during violence and intimidation. "Widows, orphans and survivors are members of our Churches and communities; we extend to them our most sincere condolences," the statement said.

"We are appealing to peace-loving Zimbabweans to go to the polls to exercise their constitutional right with a clear conscience in a free and fair manner," it added.

Zimbabwe authorities seize Baptist church's grain stocks

HARARE, Zimbabwe (ENI) — The Zimbabwe government's grain procurement company and the police have confiscated 20 tonnes of corn belonging to the Baptist Church in Bulawayo, 439 kilometres south of Harare.

The corn consignment, which was being kept in the warehouse of a city engineering company, Hubert and Davies, was intended to feed starving villagers in drought-ravaged Matabeleland South, according to the church.

The warehouse was raided on January 28 by a team of police officers and officials from the Grain Marketing Board (GMB). The raid is part of a national campaign by the government to shore up depleted grain reserves.

Pastor Ray Motsi, a senior Bulawayo Baptist Church minister, said he had personally raised the money from overseas donors to buy some of the corn. The rest had been provided by a local farmer.

He said the church had documents detailing a feeding program in which 150,000 families from different parts of Matabeleland South have been receiving the corn since October last year.

Confiscating corn

Over the past two months, the Zimbabwean government has been confiscating corn from farmers to deal with the grain shortages. The predominantly white farmers said they were keeping the grain to feed their livestock. But the government has accused them of stockpiling the grain in an attempt to starve the nation in protest against the confiscation of white-owned farms under President Robert Mugabe's land redistribution program.

The 2001 harvest is said to have fallen 40 per cent short of the more than 2 million tonnes of corn consumed in Zimbabwe each year.

The grain shortage was initially caused by poor rains but the occupation of farms under the land redistribution program has been blamed for exacerbating the problem.

The government is set to import thousands of tons of corn to supplement the dwindling grain reserves. The World Food Program has already brought in 5,700 tons to help the government meet the national food needs.

Editorial

Lessons from the Olympics

Harry der Nederlanden

The fatigue from my radiation treatments and the skin burn on my posterior, which made it impossible for me to sit for very long, came at just about the right time. Sometimes all I could do was lie back and watch some TV. And, lo, there on channel 5 were the Olympics. Before long, I was hooked. I was even watching the crazies who go flying head-first down a long, twisting icy chute at 140 kph, the ice inches from the end of their blue noses.

Spirit of competition alive and well

And when our hockey team beat the U.S.A., I jumped up and down with my son, and we opened the door wide and let out some blood-curdling war-whoops. The spirit of competition is alive and well in Canada.

Sure, we'd have welcomed our men and women and celebrated even if they had come home with the silver. But how sweet it is to beat the U.S. of A. Gretzky was wrong when he said the world wanted to beat Canada: they like nothing better than to see the U.S.A. get hammered. I suspect that many non-Canadians were cheering along with us.

But often I found myself cheering for people from other countries just because it was their last Olympics, or just because they looked so splendid, so smooth in their event, or just because they had a chance to set a new world record. After all the training, the practice, the knee operations, the self-denial, the numerous competitions just to get to the starting line, you felt badly if an athlete didn't perform his or her best. You felt the pain when three strides into the race they stumbled or when they caught an edge and came hurtling down the hill on their backsides instead of on their skis.

Although we agreed with those who said it wasn't about medals first of all but the joy of the sport and the excitement of competing with the best, we howled in anger when the judges awarded second place to what was obviously a first-place performance.

Co-operation needed to excel

The impulse to compete is definitely part of human nature. In the past, some of us have thought it better to foster a spirit of cooperation rather than one of competition, deeming it more akin to the Christian virtue of love and the ideal of *koinonia*. But, as we saw with the Canadian hockey team, co-operation — working together harmoniously and for the good of the whole — is precisely what a team must learn in order to excel. The team that was beaten by Sweden was an aggregate of individually excellent hockey players. They had to learn to click together like a team.

Kids learn a lot by participating in sports. Whether the Olympics exemplifies the best is another question. Is it really healthy for someone to devote many hours of every day, year after year, to honing a highly specialized skill like slalom skiing just so he or she can be two-tenths of a second faster than the next guy? The difference between the gold medal winner and the one who finished 15th was only three or four seconds. And the fellow competing in his third Olympics, we are told, is slower than he used to be because he's had three knee operations and chronic pain in the back. What will his knees be like when he's in his fifties, you wonder.

During the Olympic coverage we saw brief biographies of some of the Olympic athletes. The best cross-country skiers in Norway and Sweden were already on skis when they were five years old. The Austrians have downhill ski schools for kids in grade school. When I was a kid, skiing was a sport for the rich, and in many respects it still is – if you want to do it often enough to become really good.

Competition's so much part of children's play

Yet, competition is so much a part of children's play, we can't conceive a childhood without it. I'm not just thinking of organized sport. "Last one to the fence is a rotten egg!" "Come on, let's Indian wrestle. On three. One...two.... No fair! You went before I said three!" "I bet I can do more chin-ups than you can.... Hey, that's cheating; you're using your legs." "I can spit farther than anyone else in grade five or six. My goobers are ballistic missiles." "Sure, I can jump across that stream – if you go first. Haw, haw, haw! You'll never get your shoe out of that mud!"

Of course, some of the worst scrapes we got into as kids were a result of such spontaneous competitions like stone-throwing. I recall getting chased along the railroad tracks because we were throwing rocks at the white insulators on top of the telephone. We really weren't trying to do damage; they were just tempting targets, and they'd shatter if you hit them just right. We did it without slingshots, too. We got to be pretty accurate. The competition could become a little hairy at times. The worst cut I ever got on my forehead was from a well-aimed rock from a worthy adversary. I bled like a stuck pig. Not many Olympic sports demand such blood sacrifices.

One of our favorite sports was running hard and leaping off a steep cliff in the gravel pits. It gave you the sensation of flying. We probably weren't floating as gracefully as those ski jumpers in the Olympics, but then we had to rely on our legs for momentum, and not a million-dollar ski run. And our landings were a lot trickier because when you landed on the steep sand-and-gravel slope below, you didn't slide. You jumped forward and turned a somersault in the air and then you rolled head over heels till you reached the bottom. When she saw my bare back one morning, my mother wondered what in the world I'd been up to. It was covered in welts as if I'd been whipped like a runaway slave.

Like I said, we knew the meaning of sacrificing for the sake of our sport.

Many Olympic sports too elitist

The trouble with many of the sports in the Olympics is that they are too elitist. About the only sport we were introduced to as kids that has any standing in the Olympics was hockey, and the way we played it would have gotten the whole team ejected from competition for hooliganism. Sorry, Wayne, but the rest of the world is right: we did learn a brand of hockey that encouraged rough stuff. [I'm surprised that no CRC guys ever made it to the NHL; they were pretty good at smacking each other around. Sometimes we were so busy smacking each other nobody knew where the puck was. Nor did we care.] We sacrificed our bodies for the sake of the game.

The Olympics ought to introduce more democratic kinds of competitions – the sort of contests all working class kids around the world grow up trying to beat their peers at.

Such sports spring naturally from the spirit of competition inborn in all kids. I mopped floors in a school for several years and know whereof I speak. The daily bathroom Olympics: Who can stick the most toilet paper wads to the ceiling? Who can lob the most paper-towel balls over the stall door into the toilet? Who can stick the most goobers to the mirror from across the room? Who can stand back the farthest from the urinal and still hit it (most of the time)?

True, it might not make for good television. But some of those kids practiced faithfully every day.

Then there was our favorite early springtime sport: running across thin ice as lightly as possible to keep ahead of the cracks and the water. Agility, strategy, quick thinking, courage – these all came into play, more so than in hopping onto a bobsled. But did our teachers and parents encourage us? No. They were too enthralled by the elitist sports of the Olympics.

The Olympic committee could use a little input from the old gang. We understood the spirit of competition, but if we'd seen some skater in tights spinning and spinning in one spot day after day, we'd have called the guys in the white jackets to carry him off to Ponoka.

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Letters

Teens' need for acceptance reflected in their 'dress code'

Re: Dressing up-and dressing down (see Jan. 28 Christian Courier), no doubt a lot of parents might want to clip this article and lay it on their teen's desk.

Mr. Hofman suggests that casual dress in church shows a lack of respect, and this may be the root of the problem. For most teens today, acceptance by their peers is far more important than trying to impress and gain the respect of the folks in a typical church. Church was not exactly a "happening" place in the sixties and seventies but it was a place where we went to meet our friends. The church has not changed significantly in 40 years but today our children don't need to come to church to talk/meet their friends.

Although many pastors suggest that there is a spiritual awakening in curbside Christians, most teens will not readily admit to their peers that they go to church. So being "forced" to attend a church by their parents, often against their protestations, teens will go to great lengths to display their finest fashion statement.

Dressing for success

Hofman further suggests that for adults, our dress is determined by our need to earn a living and to a lesser extent to impress our peers. A lawyer has a better chance of securing a new client in a $2,500 suit than in a muscle shirt and shorts. Wearing clothes appropriate to your profession gives instant credibility. Yes, a hockey coach will wear a suit for a televised game but likely does so to impress his multi-million dollar owner. But to get the respect of his players a coach puts on his skates.

Teens today are no different. Short skirts and baggy pants are the accepted dress code of their peers and are clothes worn by their role models. Teens want to be accepted. Unfortunately they are not yet ready to line up behind the few role models in our churches. We need to work on that. Teens today are no different then teens in my day. So the same clothes that we suggest our teens should wear to church so as not to offend some critical church members may well label them a geek on the street. That is not going to happen and frankly it is we who need to get over it.

For traditionalists to "rag" on teens to conform and suggest they lack respect for the older folks is counter productive. The Pastor of a rapidly growing church in our community comes to the pulpit in blue jeans and a baggy sweater. His church now numbers in the thousands. Many of the new members in his church are those who left ours because they were hurt by insensitive remarks about some unwritten dress code. Flourishing community churches focus on the message and the person rather than the packaging. Lets leave the dictating of dress code to the army. In church we need to show teens that we respect who they are and involve them. As adults we need to be their role model. If they buy into our message they may dress more modestly out of respect for us. But respect goes both ways.

George Kloet
Mississauga, Ont.

Military chaplains should have more freedom

This is in response to the article on pages 1 and 2 of the Dec. 24 *Christian Courier* issue re. Military Chaplains. I felt a little ill at ease with Lloyd Mackey's remarks that the rebuke by the military "most likely was for practising exorcism." Using the words "most likely" is only a suggestion and does not establish that this particular chaplain practised that.

The account said the young man asked for prayer, and the chaplain did so. And it must have been successful, as the platoon commander thanked the chaplain for helping the young man.

I think we must realize that this country of Canada is not now considered a 'Christian community.' In the '40s, I was in the RCAF and conducted weekly Bible studies in the chapel, and so advertised it. But chaplains should be able to be free on a one-on-one basis to point the questioner to the source of Truth without argument.

B. W. Anderson
Agassiz, B.C.

CCEF has misleading name

The recent large ads in *Christian Courier* by the Canadian Christian Education Foundation (CCEF) create a misleading impression which needs to be clarified. The word "Canadian" in its name conveys the impression that CCEF supports curriculum development in the three Canadian regions which form Christian Schools Canada. It does not do so.

The Ontario Alliance, one of the three Canadian regions in Christian Schools Canada, has big plans for the future. It plans to develop a entirely new primary junior elementary curriculum under the leadership of its Curriculum Co-ordinator, Jim Vreugdenhil.

There is a concern among many principals of OACS schools, that donors who wish to contribute to this curriculum project may mistakenly believe that CCEF is supporting this venture. Many donors do not realize that CCEF does not fund Canadian developed curriculum.

CCEF funds CSI sponsored curriculum in the U.S.A., not Canadian curriculum. I would respectfully suggest that CCEF either change its name, or make it very clear in its ads, that none of the money it raises in Canada will be used for curriculum development in Ontario, B.C., or the Prairie region. I do not believe that the CCEF Board intentionally misleads people, but its name definitely does create confusion among donors.

Jack Zondag, Principal,
Dundas Calvin Christian School,
Dundas, Ont.

Let churches refuse charitable numbers

Not so long ago CC published an article on charitable donation numbers issued by the government. I believe the writer was right in warning against pitfalls leading to the possibility of losing that privilege.

However, I believe we have not solved our problem by adjusting our bylaws to protect us. It seems to me we are missing the point. What has happened to our belief in the separation of church and state? Have we given up on that? Why should the government decide which church is charitable and which one is not? By just assigning a number they are doing just that. We should not accept that....

Like our church, I presume most of our churches have already adjusted their bylaws. Now we think we are safe. I believe we are just kidding ourselves. We are just as vulnerable as before.

It's simple. Our churches do not yet consider practicing homosexuals as not living in sin. Many have done so already. Our churches have homosexual members. Some day we will have to deal with that.

It then needs only one member to complain to the tax people about being discriminated against. Based on the observations of our tax lawyers, that would be enough to lose our status.

Let's be correct and refuse a charitable number. Better to pay a little extra tax than to lose our church identity.

J. Visser,
Winnipeg

For a quick letter to the Editor, please send it by fax to: (905)- 682-8313, or by e-mail to: cceditor@aol.com

Thumbs — not skirts — up!

Thumbs up for Tymen Hofman's article on "Dressing up…(Jan. 28, 2002). It is high time someone starts a discussion on this part of our culture. Congrats to Hofman for daring to write it. I have long been brooding about doing one on the subject, but knowing that I sometimes write like a bull in a china shop, I feared I could not do it graciously. I hope Hofman's article will stimulate more writings, especially from women. It is easy for us men to see how women need to dress more modestly, but perhaps women have something to share with men as well. Where do men offend in terms of dress? Or don't we? And how do you women react to articles like that of Hofman?

Now that the subject has been opened up, perhaps one of these days I will write one on the subject in the context of missions and Islam.

Jan H. Boer
Vancouver

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Agriculture/Environment

Can health be made the key for farming in the future?

Elbert van Donkersgoed

Two years ago the Christian Farmers Federation set itself a goal: craft a vision — a desirable future — for Ontario agriculture. It is proving to be a daunting task.

On the one hand, powerful forces sustain change: worldwide trends, our own sincere desire to use all our God-given abilities and more basic motives like greed. On the other hand we sincerely want to unhook from just adapting — fitting, modifying, adjusting ourselves — to whatever others think will serve their interests.

We believe that nudging and prodding the food and farming sector towards a sustainable, better and desirable future is both possible *and* necessary.

We are not alone in wanting a better food and farming sector than the present rush to produce more, adopt more technology, compete and export.

In January, a group of health organizations submitted an interesting report to England's Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food.

The authors argue that after half a century of production-driven farming and food policy, the old model has outlived its usefulness. Its export-import policy isn't working and is ecologically inappropriate.

Vision for better future

Their vision for a better future for farming and food starts with putting health — human health and environmental health — at the centre. That leads to some thought-provoking proposals:

* Food costs should more fully reflect the real costs of production and distribution;

* The food supply chain should be as local and as short as possible. They propose a policy of encouraging local food suppliers to reduce 'food miles' so that all citizens are within walking or bicycling distance of food shops.

* The food supply chain should decrease its reliance on non-renewable energy;

* Look to food and farming to rebuild local economies;

And the most significant proposal is this:

* Food and farming puts a lot of effort into food safety, watching out for microbes in or on our food that can make us sick within hours or days.

That is good, the authors argue, but cardiovascular disease and cancer are much bigger, more persistent health issues. Food and farming choices have been shown to contribute to these diseases. The farming and food sector could make a larger contribution to public health, namely lower rates of cardiovascular disease and cancer — by changing what is produced and how it is produced — than by improvements in current food safety programs.

This report by English health groups suggests it will take 30 to 50 years to make health the key to the future of food and farming.

If CFFO's emerging vision becomes as dramatic as this one, it too will take 30 to 50 years of nudging and prodding current trends to create a better tomorrow.

Why Health is the Key to the Future of Farming and Food is edited by Tim Lang and Geof Rayner. It is published by the Centre for Food Policy, Thames Valley University and the UK Public Health Association. It is on their websites: **www.foodpolicy.co.uk, www.ukpha.org.uk** .

Elbert van Donkersgoed is the Strategic Policy Advisor of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, Canada. Corner Post can be heard weekly on CFCO Radio, Chatham and CKNX Radio, Wingham, Ontario. This is the Corner Post for January 25, 2002 and it is archived on the website of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario: www.christianfarmers.org.

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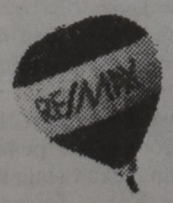
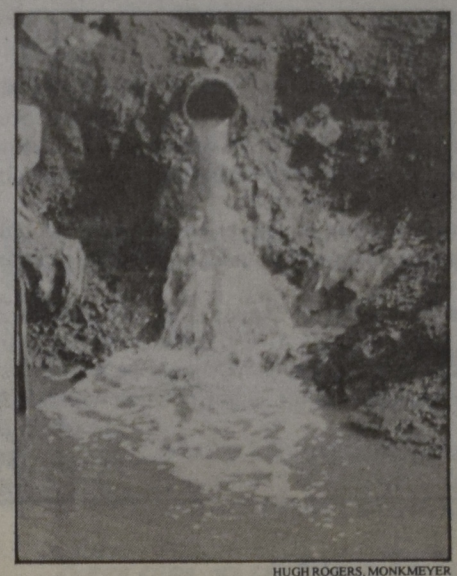


Mixing faith, values, and professional practice

Creation waits...

John Wood

Doctors have it, dentists too. The veterinarians and the librarians, the psychologists, sociologists and philosophers do. Did I mention that economists and artist, athletes and actors, airline pilots and educators, engineers and geologists, and even biologists and foresters each have a faith-based professional group? In fact, I have found more than 60 professional societies of one kind or another with a Christian mission statement. The combined membership of these groups is in the tens of thousands. And together they are doing good things for the kingdom both in North America and around the world.



HUGH ROGERS, MONKMEYER

Water pollution: The solution to the Walkertons of life is not better technology. It is better people.

But while lawyers have formed the Christian Legal Society there is nothing similar for landscape architects, urban planners, nor virtually anyone involved with environmental protection, communications, conservation or research. Environmental practitioners are a diverse lot. And the environmental sector is big, very diverse and growing.

Looking for faith-based practice

So, if you were working in a career that is broadly related to the environment, where would you go to find out about a faith-based approach to your profession? That question has animated the conversation of a number of Canadians over the past five years. And this spring it will once again be taken up at the "Faith and Earthkeeping" conference to be held at Redeemer University College campus (**www.caringforcreation.ca**). This is the third international conference of this kind to be held in Canada. The first two were at The King's University College (1998) and Trinity Western University (2000). These events have attracted a small, but committed group of individuals eager to explore a faith-based approach to environmental practice.

This year the sub-theme is "Rebuilding a Value Framework for Action." The central question is "how can Christian environmental practitioners contribute towards restoring and enhancing a faith-based environmental ethic and practice?" A diverse set of workshops and keynote speakers from both Canada and the United States will be bringing this to focus. The goal is to increase awareness of the biblical principles of environmental stewardship. Together we will explore how these principles can shape effective professional practice. And the conference will help in building a network for encouraging each other in our professional roles.

Environmentalists in many fields

Since the inception of the environmental movement some 30 years ago, environmental stewardship has matured into a recognizable social sector. It is much broader than the usual designation of "environmentalist" would indicate. Many people in business, in government, in education, and even in churches are working at tasks that are designated as environmental. The environmental movement has influenced everything from product marketing, food production, music, and theatre (film, stage, TV) to journalism, politics and even healthcare.

This column is one example of the changing way we are looking at the world. Today we live with keen environmental awareness. It is a common and growing part of our lives. The challenge now is to think more deeply about what it means to live "faith-fully" in this new context. This is not a simple task.

Are you a Christian environmental professional? What does it mean to be a Christian professional? Or, as some prefer to say, "a professional who is Christian?" The challenge of this question faces us everyday. In my own work, I interact with colleagues at other universities all the time. Our conversations are animated; the questioning and probing are sharp (most of the time!). But, as Dr. Loren Wilkinson (Professor at Regent College in Vancouver) said recently, "these are difficult days to be a theist — and no less difficult to be an atheist." What he meant is that faith-based positions seem wildly out of place. We have instrumental explanations for so many things. And it seems that science, in the broadest sense, is about to tidy up the loose ends. For all practical purposes most people can live nicely without thinking about those troublesome "theistic" questions.

What went wrong?

But then, along comes a water scandal in Walkerton, Ontario and we are plunged into reflection. What went wrong? How did the system of professional environmental protection fail us? Then we find at the heart of it is human failure. And that, of course, is why we need each other. We need the challenge and the encouraging of other individuals who will help us seek wisdom. For the solution to the Walkertons of life is not better technology. It is better people. And the answer to finding better people lies in the hands and the heart of our maker. If you are an environmental practitioner, won't you join us this spring in Ancaster, Ontario? Together we can find a better way to be stewards of God's good earth.

John R. Wood teaches environmental science at The King's University College in Edmonton.

Arts/Media

Niagara artists respond to September 11

George Langbroek's artwork Everything has a crack in it — that's how the light gets in.

Alan Doerksen

JORDAN, Ont. — Five Niagara-area artists have responded to the devastating events of last September 11 with a visually-striking and thought-provoking gallery exhibit. "9-11: Artists Respond" is being featured at the Jordan Art Gallery, in Jordan, Ont., from Feb. 15 until March 24.

"It was Tony Clennell who came up with the idea of doing something for 9-11," explains George Langbroek, one of the five featured artists. "I had thought of it myself for a number of months already, trying to come up with something, because, as an artist, I think you have to deal with it. This forced the issue, in terms of dealing with it for a specific time-period." Clennell got the other three artists "excited about doing something, as well," says Langbroek.

Langbroek lives in St. Catharines, Ont., and is a member of Jubilee Fellowship Christian Reformed Church. Floyd Elzinga, one of the other artists, is also a member of that church.

Langbroek calls his artwork *Everything has a crack in it — that's how the light gets in.*

Sackcloth and ashes

"I really like the connotations of that," observes Langbroek. "The world is not perfect, and the ultimate expression of that is the way in which the towers were blown down. When something bad happens, there's also something good that comes out of it. It forces people to consider the more meaningful religious side of life... and that did happen after these two towers came down.

"As the papers reported, the religious community, and even those who haven't been in church ever, or in a long time, sought solace in the comfort of religion and God. My particular picture started with the images of the towers coming down, and the horrific chasing of the cloud of dust by these people. I can't help but think these people thought they were in a nightmare, and at some point they would wake up and everything would be alright. The thing is, it wasn't — and the world has changed.

George Langbroek at the Jordan Art Gallery

"The centre part of my picture is the comforting part. I've flanked the crucified figure with the figures of the people covered in ash. That reminds me of the Old Testament image of God telling his people: 'Cover yourselves with sackcloth and ashes, and repent and return to me.' I've tried to depict that in specific ways."

On one side of the picture is an older woman with a tear in her eye. "It looked like my mother-in-law — even my mother," says Langbroek. "There's the resemblance there of probably everyone's grandmother. That one tear is so striking. She had probably thought that something like that would never happen again. She must have lived through at least the Second World War. The tear is really an understatement."

Beyond Words

Commenting on the other artwork in the exhibit, Langbroek says, "I find Janny Fraser's work is very striking."

One of Fraser's pieces is a silk hanging called "Beyond Words." Describing this piece, Fraser writes: "In this silk hanging, the letters and numbers hold the infinite potential of everything that was or will be expressed by the countless number of people responding to the events of Sept. 11."

Fraser also displays three chalices which contain images on the inside and outside which tie in with 9-11. "The three chalices contain collaged images that we consume and drink, in becoming us," writes Fraser. Langbroek observes that the chalices "deal with time, and there's a certain sacramental connotation."

Positive Negative — *a metal sculpture, by Floyd Elzinga.*

A jarring image

One particularly jarring image is "Positive Negative" — a metal sculpture, by Floyd Elzinga, of the American flag, which depicts the stars and stripes as flowers, which have been blown out of the metal, and which lie on the floor beneath the flag. The flag is "all rusty, and it looks like it could have been found under all the rubble," says Langbroek. "The flowers are lying on the floor — the connotation of a lot of lives and flowers on the floor as garbage. I believe that's what he tried to say."

The metal flag is hung away from the wall, so that its shadow on the wall adds another dimension to its image.

A collection of five tall pots is another artistic reflection of 9-11. "Thy are a collaboration between Floyd Elzinga and Tony Clennell, who does the pottery," explains Langbroek. Clennell "found himself doing those tall pots shortly after the towers came down.... He covered them with a rustic-looking glaze. He wanted the lids to be of steel. That's how he got together with Floyd. They did the steel lids together." One pot has an American flag painted on it, which looks worn down, as if it was found at Ground Zero.

Describing the pots, Clennell writes, "The work for this exhibit has been fired to 2400 degrees in a wood-burning kiln. The pieces were placed on their sides on seashells to distort the almost-molten clay. The scars and dripping wood ash are left as a reminder of the heat these pieces were subjected to. From the heat comes something quite beautiful."

On February 17, the gallery had a grand opening for this exhibit, which Langbroek says got a "very positive" reaction. "We probably had the most people here of any opening that we've had so far. There was a constant flow of traffic." A local cable station arrived to film the exhibit. All the art pieces are for sale, notes Langbroek.

Church

Snapshots of suffering from Indonesia's trouble spots

Compass Direct

Two Muslim-Christian conflicts in Indonesia since early 1999 have dominated the headlines. The statistics tell a grim story.

In the Malukus, more than 8,000 people have died and nearly 200,000 have been left homeless. In Central Sulawesi, the death toll is over 3,000 with perhaps more than 25,000 having fled to refugee camps. The conflict in Central Sulawesi is temporarily stilled, following a Muslim-Christian peace pact in December. But peace is fragile, and in Maluku there seems little chance of lasting peace without international intervention.

Behind the statistics are the human stories of loss, betrayal and rape. Yet also of forgiveness, reconciliation and hope. Geoff Stamp recently toured some of the affected areas, interviewing and profiling the local believers. We present his various stories as a series of heartbreaking yet hopeful snapshots of how Christians manage under extreme persecution.

COURTESY CHRISTIAN AID MISSION

Metho (top left), Adele and their family have gone through excruciating suffering in Indonesia.

Abuse still common in Malukus

MANADO — Metho and his wife Adele are in hiding, fearing that she will be taken prisoner again as the sex-slave of a Muslim leader. Their story is just one among many of the anti-Christian violence and human rights abuse that continues in Halmahera, Seram, Ambon and on many other islands in the Maluku island chain.

Almost two years ago, Metho's wife and daughter were taken prisoner during a week-long raid on their Christian village. Theirs was the third and final village to be purged of Christians on the island of Doi, to the northwest of Halmahera.

Two thousand Muslim warriors attacked the 400 people in Metho's village — killing, looting and burning. Those who escaped into the forest were hunted down like wild animals. They were only allowed to live if they converted to Islam on the spot. Metho and his family survived for two days before the Muslims caught up with them.

Outnumbered and with nothing more than a machete to defend his family, Metho was unable to prevent the Muslim extremists from killing his eight-year-old son, Christianto, and his mother and mother-in-law. His wife, Adele, and daughter, Christine (then nine years old) were taken captive.

Metho's is a long story of bravery, miraculous escapes from the "hunters" and tireless attempts to rescue his wife and child. After many months of no news, Metho finally received a letter from his wife in May 2001. He was only able to read the first two pages. Her story of the humiliation, the attempts to gang-rape her, and her finally agreeing to "marry" one of the Muslim extremist leaders in order to avoid further abuse was too much for him.

He gave her letter to an official from Manado who was visiting the area to reconcile the Muslims and Christians. Metho told him to take it to the churches in Manado and ask them to pray for him.

Daughter rescued

A reconciliation meeting was held on Doi island on July 21, and Metho was able to get his daughter back with the help of a Christian soldier. She was being held hostage by the Muslims extremists as a guarantee of the good behavior of the other 26 prisoners. Thirteen others were also released that same day.

The churches were praying for Metho's situation.

Metho's wife had given birth to a daughter by her Muslim captor. One day, her Muslim "husband" told Adele she could travel to Manado, in northern Sulawesi, to visit her relatives. When Metho heard about this, he could not believe it. He went to Manado where he found his wife after 18 months of separation.

"That day I rejoiced and praised God for all He had done for me," he said. "I don't want revenge — that is God's right. I only want peace between us. It is true that these Laskar Jihad (Muslim extremists) have done some terrible things, and they are responsible for the murders and forced conversion of many Christians on Doi. But we will not get anywhere by hatred. We just want to live peacefully and rebuild our lives."

Church leaders question whether peace is possible in the present climate. With the majority of the Indonesian armed forces being Muslim — often openly supporting the actions of the Muslim extremists — there is little protection for people like Metho and his family.

There are thousands like Metho, Christians from Halmahera who have lost their homes and their livelihoods, living in refugee shelters and camps in Manado and in other towns and settlements. Some of them were persuaded to return to their original villages, assured by the authorities that it was safe to do so. Several were murdered as recently as last November.

Christian leaders are working to help resettle some refugees in new villages where the situation is fairly calm. The majority, however, have to be supported by the churches because they are without the means to help themselves. In December, the Manado government withdrew its support for the displaced people living in refugee camps in the Manado area, claiming that their refusal to return to their villages proves they are not real refugees.

One Christian leader estimated that there were more than 4,000 displaced people from Halmahera in need of food, shelter, clothes, medicines, Scriptures and other goods basic to their survival. He also said that his information indicated that some 6,000 Christians were "being held against their wills" by Laskar Jihad Muslims throughout North Maluku — some in makeshift camps; some being forced to convert to Islam or risk being killed; some, like Metho's wife, the victims of terrible human rights abuse.

Metho is not bitter, but he has no hope for justice. And while the Muslim leader is threatening to take Metho's wife back by force, he and his family will have to go on living in secret. Metho has forgiven those who killed his son, mother and other relatives; he has also forgiven the man who stole and abused his wife and held his daughter captive. The new daughter has been greeted with great love and attention.

"She will be brought up as a Christian in spite of her real father's wishes," Metho said. "God's power is the only reason for my being able to win through. Now, at least, my family is back together.

"How long must we [Christians] continue to suffer before there is an end to the forced conversions and the ongoing destruction of our livelihood? International pressure seems to have helped to stop the violence in Poso. I only wish they would think of Halmahera," Metho said.

Some will always bear the scars

TENTENA — Many people have been injured or traumatized in the ethnic and religious violence that spread in 2001 across the Poso region of Central Sulawesi. Few people have escaped so miraculously and yet been so physically and mentally scarred as Eci Rantelangi, a young Christian woman in her early twenties who is treasurer of the Protestant Church Synod and a member of the Tentena Crisis Centre.

In February 2001, Eci was returning to Tentena from Palu by bus when a bomb left under a seat in front of her exploded. A man sitting in that seat had got off the bus saying he did not know where his friend lived in Tentena. The other passengers even offered to help him to locate his friend. A short while later, the explosion ripped through the bus leaving large holes in the floor and roof and shattering the windows.

Eci finds it painful to recall the incident. She says that if it were not for her faith and God's protection, she would have died. She remembers the woman who fell into a hole in the floor and was dragged by the bus. She also recalls the conductor, a young man who had been smoking in the doorway. He was thrown off the bus and landed on sharp bamboo.

"Everyone was screaming or crying hysterically, and the bus was still moving," Eci says. "I had opened my mouth in a scream and felt glass fly into it and embed itself in my throat. The woman in the hole cried out for help but I could not pull her out. I told her to hold on to whatever she could. Her right side had been ripped away. I crawled towards the back exit, away from the hole. I helped a woman who could not walk by lifting her onto my back. When we got to the exit, I just rolled out of the bus and landed on the roadside."

Eci then got up and tried to help others. She stopped a bus travelling in the other direction. People were telling her that her hand was almost falling off and her thigh was a mess.

Suspicious police actions

"I found my flesh hanging out of my leg and tried to push it back in," Eci says. "The bus took me to the nearest clinic in a village called Sausu. Here the nurses cleaned my wounds but they could do nothing else, and no one got painkillers. The other victims arrived and were also attended to. Then the police came and started questioning everyone. They said we had to go to Parigi, another village where the majority of people are Muslim. We knew that the facilities there were no better than in Sausu. I suspected another motive and insisted that I be taken to a proper hospital in Palu."

The police would not allow Eci to go to Palu, however, until they had finished their questioning. Thankfully some cousins who lived locally arrived at the clinic. They had heard about the accident and knew Eci would be on one of the two buses traveling to Tentena that day. They demanded she be allowed to travel with them to Palu. The fact that Eci had connections with the police in Palu also helped. She was finally allowed to leave after midnight — more than 10 hours after the explosion — and faced another two hours of mountain road.

"Later, I heard that the Muslim leaders in Parigi questioned the police about me. 'Why didn't you bring her? We would have made her suffering worse,' they said. They abused the other passengers and told them it was because they were Christians that they had to suffer like this. They stopped the medical staff in Parigi from issuing

Continued on page 9...

... continued from page 8

any painkillers."

Eci had been carrying about $8,000 to pay the salaries of the church synod staff. It was in a plastic bag that had been damaged in the blast. As she was being taken to the clinic, Eci remembered leaving the bag on the bus and asked someone to bring it to her. The man who fetched it did not realize how precious the contents of that bag were. She knows it would have disappeared if she had left it with her other bags. She called it a miracle.

Eci has had four operations on her left hand, and it is still not functioning normally. Her thigh has been repaired, but the wound has affected her walking: when she is tired, the limp becomes worse. She believes that God has a purpose in her being alive, and she has not given up helping the refugees.

"When we travel, we try to hide our identities in case we are stopped and searched. With my old student's pass, I can be a neutral person — as the synod treasurer, I am a prime target for the militant Muslims," she says.

"I was told I must learn to forgive the man who planted the bomb. It is hard — I saw the suffering of the others, some worse off than me — but in time I will forget these images of horror that still linger in my mind."

Rejoicing in freedom

BITUNG — "We were forced to become Muslims. We were circumcised, both men and women, and made to follow all the Muslim customs. We kept hoping for a Christian to come and save us — maybe the churches, maybe the Americans. But no one came and we were virtually enslaved until we escaped earlier this year," said Jan Safati, the Lata Lata village secretary and religious education teacher in a refugee camp in Bitung, on the eastern side of the Minahasan peninsula. Safati is one of about 1,200 refugees from Lata Lata, an island in North Maluku. Their Christian village was attacked by 2,000 local Muslims and Laskar Jihad extremists on Feb. 2, 2000. After stiff resistance, resulting in the deaths of 37 Christians, the villagers fled into the forest where they hid for three weeks.

The Manado government told the refugees in Bitung to return to Halmahera and that their status as refugees will no longer be recognized. The evangelical church (GMIM) and other Protestant churches, which have joined together to form the Manado Crisis Centre (MCC), met with authorities on January 3 and requested that the refugees from Lata Lata be allowed to settle in Bitung and be given some land to farm.

"It seems that the Manado government is prepared to bend over backwards to accommodate the requests of the Muslims to settle in Bitung or build mosques here," said Mona Saroinsong, co-ordinator of the MCC. "We told the governor that the refugees should not be forced to return to Halmahera."

Safati had just returned from a visit to Halmahera, where 800 Lata Lata villagers living in Baru and other villages spoke of the sickness and lack of facilities they face there. "It is a terrible situation for these people. After all they have experienced — having escaped from Lata Lata where they were virtual slaves of Islam — these people are now facing poverty, hunger and a shortage of medical facilities. They are plagued with malaria with no medicines to fight it. That is what the authorities want us to return to!"

"The attack was unexpected," explained Isaac Garera, the village chief. "We had signed an agreement, even with the Sultan of Bacan, that the local Muslims would protect the Christians, and in the extreme case of an attack, the Muslims would provide the boats for us to escape in."

Convert to Islam or die

In the tropical forests, they lived off fruit and leaves. Two women gave birth there. Some of the children got sick. In the end, the chief decided there was nothing to do but give themselves up. There were negotiations, but these all came to nothing when they were given a choice: convert to Islam or be "cleansed" — the Muslim extremist term for "killed."

"While we were still in the jungle, some Muslims saw a pastor who had escaped with us when the attack came," Garera said. "They had recognized him on the beach, and he now became part of the negotiations. We had to give him up with three of our church elders to show our determination to be Muslims. We could not do this, so the Rev. Isuf Benjamin Pattiasinna gave himself up willingly along with the three elders."

When they were allowed to come back to their village, they found out what had happened to these men. The army — Yonif 511 unit — had been present at the negotiations supporting the Laskar Jihad. When the Muslims captured the pastor, the army commander was there along with the chief of police. The policeman insulted the pastor, calling him a provocateur [the equivalent of a terrorist in Halmahera]. The Muslims then took the four men, tied their hands behind their backs and blindfolded them. They were taken to the Muslim village of Bakimaake where they cut off their heads and buried their bodies in the sand.

All the other villagers agreed to convert to Islam in order to save their lives. A month later, they were ritually circumcised. They had to attend prayers five times a day, and if they were late, were punished by being forced to stand in the sea or sit in a tree for hours.

"We lived as best we could. When one of our number died, we would take them into the forest and a church elder would pray for them," Garera said.

One by one, the "former" Christians got permission to visit relatives far away or work on a fishing boat. Any excuse would do to escape their way of life. From June to October 2001, the villagers from Lata Lata left the island in ones and twos. In one daring move, Chief Garera took 80 people with him to Ternate, a Muslim stronghold, where they pretended to be shopping. That night they found a boat willing to take them to Halmahera and escaped.

God Bless Indonesia, the aid organization of the Abba Love Church in Jakarta, offered to pay their passage to Bitung. The Rev. Jeff Hammond of Abba Love Church remembers the arrival of the refugees. "It still brings tears to my eyes. They were so happy to be in Sulawesi. They sang, 'What a Friend We Have in Jesus' in their own language," he said.

Many of the "converts" to Islam have rededicated their lives to Christ. Safati believes they have come a long way through this time of trial. "We were not serious in our worship and knowledge of the Bible. Some of us got involved in traditional magic, some drank too much or were promiscuous. Now we know that God has rescued us. Not by the way we had imagined, but the way He wanted it to happen, and we are so joyful to be here," he said.

Nothing is more important

Walt Brouwer

One day a publisher of a local newspaper who had begun to attend our church took me for lunch. He complained that pastors didn't want to write for the newspaper. Two weeks later I took him for lunch and made a proposal for a weekly column. However I insisted that it would not appear on the Religion page. And so for over three years I have been writing a weekly column in one of Nanaimo's newspapers. It is found on its Better Living page.

I continue to receive notes, e-mails, letters, calls — sometimes from total strangers – expressing appreciation for speaking to their need. It gives me enormous satisfaction to know that people are encouraged by it. Through the weekly articles, people have returned to church — and not just Christ Community, the wonderful church family I serve. Some even became followers of Jesus.

Greatest joys, most painful hurts

The articles that make the greatest impact from the responses I get are those that deal with relationships. Relationships not only provide life's greatest joys, but its most painful hurts. Benjamin Spock once said, "The human race is a vicious species of potentially wonderful people." People long to become masters in the art of getting along with others. To me, this makes sense because the most important things in life are not things; they are relationships.

Nothing in life is more important than relationships.

Absolutely nothing.

I say this not only as a reflection of my personal values, but as a pastor with more than 10 years of theological education and almost 20 years of ministry. Even in the ultimate sense, nothing is more important than relationships. You were created to know and love your Maker.

More than anything else, your relationship with God determines who you are and how you define reality. Through regeneration you are a new creation and it marks your ultimate destiny. Knowing God is the defining factor in your personal identity. The self-identity of an atheist is radically and deeply different than that of a Christian. It profoundly affects how you view and accept yourself. And in turn, your self-concept and self-worth impact how you see, live with and behave toward others in marriage, family, at work and leisure.

Every time I read the life stories of Jesus to nourish my own soul, I am struck by the freshness of the gospels and the authenticity of Christ. Though I've read them many, many times, I glean new insights as if I were reading them for the very first time. Jesus' mission was to provide people with the assurance of heaven, but the passion of Jesus often focused on the here and now. He fed the hungry and healed the sick. He wept at a funeral, not because someone had died, but because the people who grieved the loss of a loved one were utterly helpless in the face of death. One time, as Jesus saw Jerusalem sprawled out before Him, He shed tears for her citizens because peace was elusive to them. (How little things change!)

Missing joy and comfort of intimacy with God

There is a whole lot more to life than what lies between the cradle and the grave. Yet God also wants you to know and love Him today. There is a double tragedy when people do not know their Maker. They not only forfeit the assurance of eternal life; they miss the joy and comfort of intimacy with God that is possible in this broken, fractured, unfair world.

You are created with a vacuum in your soul. Only God can fill that vacuum. Until He does there is an emptiness to life, something is missing, things are just not right.

Yet, to know God inspires you to dream dreams, and to release your creative powers, your intelligence and your heart's passions to create something beautiful in this battered world. Through Jesus, God transforms the tavern of your life into a temple, and out of the cacophony of your frantic, empty existence, He creates a symphony of praise. That's the purpose of your life.

My point is that nothing in life is more important than relationships. You are not the end-product of a mindless, loveless, accidental, purely materialistic process called evolution; you are the intentional creation of a loving God who made you to love you.

To know this and to enter into this relationship through Jesus is the beginning of life.

Walt Brouwer is Pastor of Christ's community at Christ Community Church, in absolutely beautiful Nanaimo, B.C.

Education

The map on my family room wall

Ron de Boer

I did it because of my cousin Dave's desk.

A couple of weeks ago, I surprised my wife by purchasing a 1½- by 1½-metre laminated world map and tacking it to our family room wall.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ATLAS OF THE WORLD

Big on maps

"You're big on maps, aren't you?" she said, her hands on her hips. When I insisted an atlas remain on the living room coffee table while our kids were small, she raised her right eyebrow at me.

"They'll grow up having a sense of the world and our relationship to it," I reasoned.

But the atlas didn't measure up to my expectations. Atlases have too many pages, and the world is far too disconnected for my liking. A big world map — that's what we needed. That way, when the CBC news guy says fighting has broken out on the Gaza Strip, the kids won't picture the jagged coast of Argentina. When hostilities arise in Pakistan, they won't draw a mental image of that finger of land jutting into the Bay of Fundy.

My cousin Dave's map covered the top of his desk where he did his homework. I don't know why, but I couldn't take my eyes off that multicolored map whenever we hung around his farmhouse bedroom. I confess it crossed my mind once to steal his desk. Africa was pink, the U.S.S.R. green, and all those South American countries different shades of brown and yellow — and of course the various tints of blue water.

Something profound

There's something profound about a beautifully colored world map, just as there's something profound in the palate of colors a box of crayons holds. Both are creations with infinite potential. If I imagine a heaven's view of the world as this colorful puzzle-piece picture on a powder blue canvas, I can imagine God's gaze of pride on this creation.

We see only a general perspective of the world when we stare at a map on a family room wall — blue-green rivers, black dotted-and-dashed borders, pastel countries and territories. God, of course, has a much sharper view of the goings-on within those colors; he sees the most minute details of sin and goodness. Imagine how it must have pained him to watch the blue hues spreading over the pinks and browns and greens of land until the world was covered by flood-water in the days of Noah; now imagine hearing the cries of his beloved wayward children drowning and then growing silent. Imagine how it must have felt watching Nazi Germany spread its Swastika across those tiny land-locked countries of western Europe and then witnessing the horrors of gas chamber murders.

There are some advantages to seeing only the colors of a world map.

During the cold war of my elementary school days, I was never afraid of a nuclear attack because Russia, of course, was thousands of miles to our west. There was one page in the atlas for Canada, and twenty-some pages later, the U.S.S.R. It wasn't until high school geography that I stared in horror at a world map and realized the northwest corner of Canada was mere inches away from the northeast corner of the U.S.S.R. With a good wind behind you, you could shoot a pellet gun from one country to the other.

Amazing mental capacity

People raised with maps in their homes have an amazing mental capacity to remember details like islands, lakes, even peninsulas. My friend, Ted, has an incredible memory of the world map and is one of those guys who begins rubbing his palms together when he gets a "Geography" question in Trivial Pursuit. Give Ted three border countries, and he'll tell you the body of water lapping up on their shores. Ask Ted how many creeks empty into the west side of the Red Sea, he'll name and spell them. As much as you sometimes want to, you can never tell Ted to "get lost." It's physically impossible for him not to know where he is both longitudinally and latitudinally in relation to the St. Lawrence River. I suspect Ted grew up with a big map on his family room wall.

I thought about buying a globe, a good basketball-sized earth on a stainless steel quarter-moon axis. A globe allows you to see the exact shape of the world. If you shine a light on one side of the globe, you can easily see how the sun works. When you spin it around slowly, you can figure out pretty quickly how night and day work.

The flat earth

Unlike Charles K. Johnson, president of the International Flat Earth Research Society, you probably believe the earth is round. The Mojave desert, where Johnson lives, is as flat as a pool table. Nearby is Edwards Air Force Base where the Space Shuttle is tested. There, also, the Shuttle will land when it returns from orbiting the earth. "You can't orbit a flat earth," says Johnson. He believes the Space Shuttle is a ludicrous joke and believes that the main purpose of the space program is to prop up a dying myth — that the earth is a globe.

The theory that the earth is a globe is called the "heliocentric system" and was devised by Nicholas Copernicus sometime in the early 1500s — if my Grade 11 history notes are telling the truth, that is. When Copernicus suggested the earth was round, he was going against 1000 years of scientific thought, and he greatly angered the church, because a heliocentric theory seems to go against the words of the Bible. According to the New Testament, Charles Johnson argues, the Bible says Jesus ascended "up" into heaven. "The whole point of the Copernican theory is to get rid of Jesus by saying there is no up and down. The earth-is-a-globe theory denies the truth of the Bible," says Johnson, who recently passed away. The jury is out as to whether he went up, down or neither.

A seemingly reasonable person might argue that what is written in the Bible is contextual. If the scientists when the Bible was written believed that the earth was flat, the writers of the Bible, of course, would describe Jesus' ascension as going "up." Purist scientists believe the earth is rotating and therefore know the concept "up" ceases to exist. You and I probably point skyward and consider an Air Canada jet "up" in the sky, even though we believe in the Copernicus theory that the earth is round and rotating, therefore you and I probably don't deserve to have an opinion. The question is "why do you and I believe the earth is round?" The answer is because we have faith in our scientists.

So, I probably should have purchased a globe instead of a big flat laminated map of the world because my Grade 11 history teacher taught me that we believe in the science of Nicholas Copernicus, even though there are several Biblical references that indicate the world might be flat.

Flat or round, the world is still the world — seven continents, four oceans, countless mountain ranges and river systems, vast areas of frozen tundra and rainforests and the odd farm pond just asking for my cousin Dave and I to build a raft and float it across when we're not staring at his desk map.

Seeing the world in all its fullness

I like my giant wall map. I like seeing the world in all its fullness. I like the sense of wholeness it offers. And every once in awhile, I stand in front of it and imagine God looking down at the world. With news of terrorist attacks, ethnic cleansing, war and rumors of wars on the TV news in the background, I sometimes wonder what he's thinking. Thankfully, every square inch of pink, light green, medium brown and deep blue has been redeemed. I can mark with a thumbtack the exact location where Christ was born and the approximate area where he died on the cross. It's almost perfectly central on my map. How fitting, since Christ's Birth and Death are central to the world.

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Russian Orthodox condemn new Vatican dioceses as hostile to relations

Andrei Zolotov

MOSCOW (ENI) — Satisfying the repeated requests of its small Russian flock but plunging to new depths in its relations with the Russian Orthodox Church, the Vatican has set up Roman Catholic dioceses in Russia.

The Vatican claims that the move is simply an administrative measure. "With today's decision, the Holy See has done nothing other than bring the organization of the Catholic community in Russia into line with that in other parts of the world, as set down by church law," Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls said.

Like establishing a rival church

For the Orthodox, however, the Vatican's decision amounts to the establishment of a rival church.

The Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church described the establishment of a "Catholic Church of Russia" as a "challenge to Orthodoxy." The patriarchate said the decision revealed the Vatican's true "missionary aims" and called into question its overall ecumenical commitment.

The decision also deals a blow to the possibility of the Pope's long-desired visit to Russia in the foreseeable future, it said.

The Moscow Patriarchate announced on February 13 that it was postponing indefinitely the visit to Moscow of Cardinal Walter Kasper — president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity — who was scheduled to meet Moscow Patriarch Alexei II. The Vatican, for its part, said that no changes were planned to the cardinal's visit, although the trip might have to be put back a few days.

Patriarch Alexei's consent is considered necessary for any visit by the Pope to Russia. President Vladimir Putin said last month that he was ready to invite the Pope to Moscow at "any time," but that relations between the churches should first be improved — something the president couldn't do but was ready to "encourage."

In recent weeks, there has been growing speculation in Moscow that the Kremlin and the Vatican might have agreed behind the patriarch's back to go ahead with the visit.

Igor Vyzhanov, a Moscow Patriarchate official in charge of relations with the Vatican, however, rejected the suggestion. "We have complete and mutual understanding with the government on this matter," he said.

In a letter to Cardinal Kasper on February 13 calling off the cardinal's visit, Metropolitan Kirill, who heads the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external relations, said that talks "would not be able to achieve their main goal — a real resolution of problems and a radical improvement in relations between the two churches," Interfax news agency reported.

WCC PHOTO: PETER WILLIAMS

A Russian Orthodox monastery 80 km north of Moscow. Russian Orthodox leaders feel the Vatican is trying to take over their turf.

The new Catholic Archbishop Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz put the number of Catholics in Russia at about 600,000.

Navarro-Valls, the Vatican spokesman, said that the Russian government did not object to the Catholic church's decision, Associated Press reported. But according to Russia's foreign ministry, the Russian government tried to dissuade the Vatican from taking such a step without first settling the issue with the Russian Orthodox Church.

Of major importance to Orthodox and Catholics

While titles and forms of church government may mean little to outsiders, they are of major importance for the Orthodox and Catholic churches, which started as a single church, but split apart in 1054.

In a statement on February 12, Patriarch Alexei and the Holy Synod said that "founding an 'ecclesiastical province [of Russia]' in essence means creating a local Catholic Church of Russia centred in Moscow and claiming to have as its flock the Russian people, who are culturally, spiritually and historically the flock of the Russian Orthodox Church.

"It means a challenge to Orthodoxy. Nothing like this [the establishment of a Catholic province] has ever happened in the history of our country."

While both Navarro-Valls and Kondrusiewicz have justified the decision by citing the existence of Russian Orthodox dioceses in the West, the Orthodox Church maintains that its foreign structures are not missionary in nature, serving only the needs of Russian Orthodox Christians living abroad.

Archbishop Kondrusiewicz also categorically denied charges of proselytizing on the part of the Catholic church.

"I do not recognize the term 'canonical territory'," the new archbishop said, referring to territories of the former Soviet Union that the Moscow patriarchate has claimed as Orthodox. "Christ did not divide the world into territories, he said: 'Go and teach all nations.'"

The timing of the Vatican's decision has been questioned. It was made just as signs had appeared of a cautious rapprochement between the two churches.

A Vatican diplomat in Moscow described the timing as a coincidence. "It happened now because the [Catholic] Church is ripe for it," he told ENI, speaking on condition of anonymity.

A Russian Orthodox Church diplomat said the decision was probably the result of a lack of co-ordination between different departments and various parties in the Vatican. "The Vatican is not a homogenous organization," the official, who did not wish to be identified, told ENI.

"While one party wanted to improve relations with us, the other wanted something else," the diplomat asserted.

Therapy no substitute for faith – a belated letter to the editor

Getting Unstuck
Arlene Van Hove

Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey warned his audience at the Amsterdam 2000 conference for evangelists — organized by the Billy Graham organization — that "therapy is no substitute for faith." (CC, September 18, 2000) He further stressed "...idolatry reveals itself when it replaces the Gospel by focusing solely on satisfying 'my happiness, my needs and my desires'" and "'Christ the Savior' becomes 'Christ the counsellor.'" He further concluded, "our society is fascinated with the healing of the body and mind. Its unspoken assumption is that if we can but keep in tune with the well-being of our inner selves, all will be well."

Predictably, British therapists were annoyed at the criticism and Brian Beber, chairperson of the National Association of Counsellors, Hypnotherapists and Psychotherapists sputtered defensively: "I would be extremely concerned were any therapists of my acquaintance to consider themselves a substitute for Christ." Another irate counsellor wrote: "therapists no more claim to be 'saviors' than do teachers or employers. None of them claims to purvey salvation, wisdom or security."

Therapy to satisfy our happiness, needs and desires?

The above CC clipping has been in my "column ideas to be addressed" file for some time, as you can see from the issue date. I have been passing it up month after month in favor of more interpersonal topics. However, now is as good a time as any to address the matter.

When the above CC arrived in the mail I read the news item with interest. I was, however, *startled* by the line of *defense* the therapeutic spokepersons took by vigorously denying that they see themselves as 'saviors" in any way! Was that the bottom line in this news article?

I realize news briefs are sometimes limited to a certain amount of printed space, therefore, we can assume we may not have the complete picture. Yet, the reading public forms its opinions by what they have in front of them. Consequently, that is all we have to work with. So, from my reading of the article, it seems the Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey's understanding of therapy is that it focuses on "satisfying our happiness, needs and desires."

Grappling to become real

Therapy, as I have mentioned before, is not about happiness. It is about grappling to "become real." It is about moving towards a better understanding of ourselves as well as the world around us. It is about healing in the area of guilt, fear, anger and forgiveness. It is about developing healthier relationships with ourselves, others and God. It is about understanding God's plan for our lives. It is about accepting God's incredible sacrifice of Himself.

Ultimately, it is about appreciating an imperfect world that brings joys and sorrows, yet allows us to live with a hope that passes all understanding. But you have to "be there" to know what I am talking about. And I am no "savior" just a fellow traveling sinner!

Arlene Van Hove is a psychotherapist with Cascade Christian Counselling Association in Surrey, B.C.

Education

Christian schools and the loss of identity

Harry der Nederlanden

Christian educational institutions — from grade school to college but also institutions like *Christian Courier* and the Christian Labour Association — wrestle constantly with certain tensions. One of the central ones is the tension between following a specific Christian tradition, in our case the Reformed one, and striving to be more inclusive, to be catholic in the sense of universal, to seek out that central core where all Christians are united by participating in the mind of Christ.

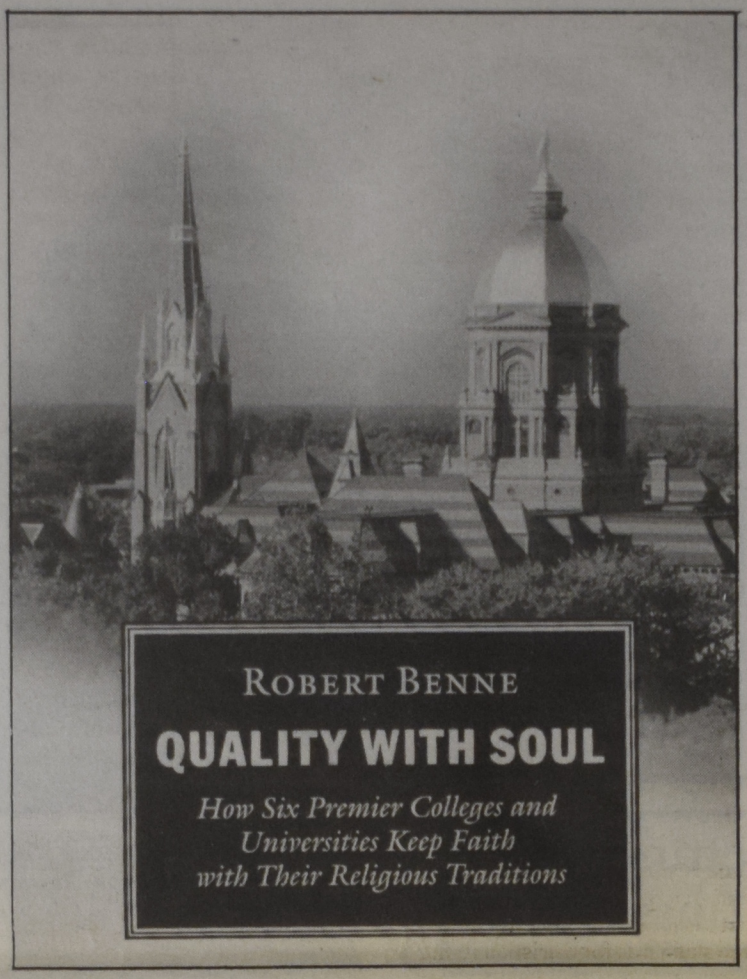
Christian schools, from kindergarten to university, want to do more than instruct the children of their own tradition. They are stewards of a rich deposit which it is their mission to share as widely as possible, so they make great efforts to attract those from other traditions that don't as a rule promote Christian education. Often they attract people from other traditions for peripheral reasons: these may be dissatisfied with the academic quality or the curriculum of the public system or they may simply want a Christian atmosphere, a more protected environment for their children. Often, too, Christian schools simply want more students because they need more tuition-paying parents to provide a full-orbed education.

Recruiting from broader evangelical community

Calvin College, for example, is able to offer such a wide array of courses and programs because it attracts almost half of its students from non-Reformed churches. Calvin is not alone in recruiting in the broader evangelical community and beyond. Dordt, Redeemer and Kings do so too. And in most places, Christian day schools founded by Reformed parents eagerly seek to enlist Baptists and other evangelicals who are beginning to share the vision.

Yet, all of them are aware that broader participation can easily lead to dilution, to a loss of concreteness as they slouch toward a common denominator approach.

There's another dynamic at work as well. When I arrived at Dordt in the early '60s , I quickly discovered a dozen or so Canadian students who were turned on by the vision of a Christian scholarship that would serve as a transforming leaven in American and Canadian society. Almost all of us were products of public schools. But we had been fired by Kuyperian dreams and were filled (perhaps even bloated) with a sense of possibilities.



At first we were puzzled by the blasé attitude of most of the American students. Almost all of them were graduates of Christian high schools. A sizeable proportion of them had been taught Reformed Doctrine in high school, while we Canadians had received only catechetical instruction and participated in Young People's Society. Those who are immersed in a tradition, it seems, often find it hard to appreciate its distinctiveness and its richness, especially if it's spoon-fed by parents and teachers; it becomes part of the daily grind, the ordinary, the taken-for-granted.

Concretely confronted with secular world

It is important for Christian kids (and parents) to be concretely confronted with the secular world, for it is only by seeing the poverty, the emptiness of a mind and of a life without faith, without redemptive love, without a healing justice, without a spiritual source of energy and renewal that we can appreciate what it means to be engrafted into the people of God and enlisted in the dynamic of his Kingdom-coming. The antithesis — the experiential knowledge that we are fighting forces that erode, corrupt and destroy the meaning and the joy of life in God's world and that only God-in-Christ can restore us — is an indispensable part of Christian learning.

We want to direct and protect our kids, but we don't want to shelter them so much that we take them out of the world. If we do the latter, the world takes over our "Christian" institution because we seek to rely on our own resources instead of on faith, Scripture and the Holy Spirit. Keeping our Christian minds and institutions open, free and oriented toward God's program of world-redemption is not an add-on; it is a necessity. Christian education is not and may not be a cocoon, it's a pair of wings.

Quality with Soul

Robert Benne's ***Quality with Soul: How Six Premier Colleges and Universities Keep Faith with their Religious Traditions*** examines a number of Christian institutions of higher learning in the U.S. that have not succumbed to the forces of secularization. Directly or indirectly, Christian churches have founded orphanages, hospitals, schools, colleges, seminaries, homes for the elderly and so on. The vast majority of these institutions are no longer animated by a Christian understanding of what it means to be human.

What is it about schools like Calvin and Wheaton and several others that enabled them to withstand this large scale capitulation to the spirit of the enlightenment, asks Benne. He describes the process of secularization: "first, making education 'nonsectarian' by identifying with a general, generic Christianity; then by an appeal to spiritual and moral ideals of a vaguely religious or patriotic cast; and finally by the exclusion of specifically Christian religious values and practices in the name of allegedly universal intellectual, moral and democratic qualities." Many of them took that path by dividing life into two spheres — the sphere of knowledge, where reason and science rule, and the sphere of faith, which is personal and private.

Three dimensions of Christianity

Benne distinguishes three dimensions of Christianity that must be held as publicly relevant for the school to sustain its Christian identity: its *vision*, its *ethos* and *Christian persons* committed to that vision and ethos.

Vision is a comprehensive account of reality and life which provides the context and shape for all our knowledge. It must be held as "unsurpassable", that is, ultimate and final. But Christianity is more than a view of life, it is also a way of life (*ethos*) that includes worship, patterns of moral behavior and a sense of calling or vocation. Without *persons* deeply committed to the truth of the Christian vision and who model and defend a Christian way of life in positions of leadership and in the student body, the vision and ethos would remain abstract, disembodied.

Those church-related colleges that lost their Christian identity (the great majority in the U.S.) did so because fewer and fewer people committed to the heritage of the founding tradition joined the faculty, administration, board and student body. (In passing, Benne notes that Calvin and Dordt's student bodies have become much less homogeneous as well.) Most church-related schools began by requiring that all faculty be members of the supporting church, but all the secularized schools long ago relaxed such requirements. Some still have presidents from their church and representatives on the board of trustees, but not enough to uphold the vision and ethos of the founders.

One of the surest signs of secularization, claims Benne, is the displacement of worship or chapel from the campus. First it is made voluntary, then gradually that time slot is no longer protected and chapel becomes neglected. A similar thing happens to the school's sense of responsibility for holding students to the standards of behavior of their particular Christian tradition. During the 1960s, most schools surrendered any effort to stand *in loco parentis* (in place of parents) and they jettisoned most external rules and regulations of student conduct.

Among the first things the schools that became secularized did was to abandon the particular theological tradition of its founding community in an effort to be less "sectarian". They sought a more generic form of Christianity, but soon slipped into a vague cultural Christianity or moralism. "Rather than preserving vitality, however, they were evacuating the Christian account of reality from the intellectual enterprise," observes Benne.

Trapped in a vicious cycle

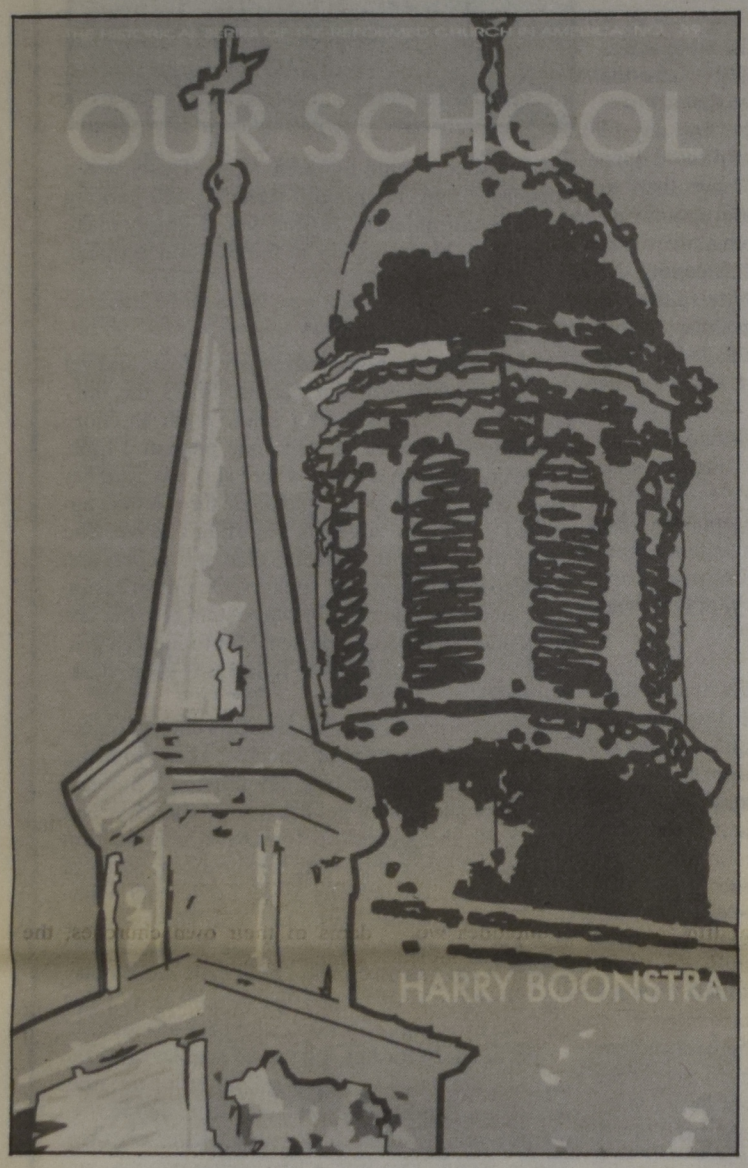
Why weren't there sufficient people committed to the vision and ethos of the sponsoring tradition at all those formerly church-related colleges? Benne points to the pull of the educational market and the influence of the enlightenment paradigm as "external forces" that subverted the character of the schools. In order to appeal to a broader market beyond the students of their own churches, the schools abandoned their "sectarian" identities and embraced a more open vision and ethos, and naturally began hiring personnel from outside their tradition. As a result, however, the sponsoring churches stopped thinking of the school as "our school" and began sending their children elsewhere and eased away from financial support. This increased the urgency for the schools to recruit students from elsewhere, and made it even more necessary to make themselves attractive to a wider market, to relax core requirements in theology and to tailor the curriculum to the consumer. The schools became trapped in a vicious cycle.

The negative influence of the Enlightenment refers to the belief that our knowledge of reality doesn't need a supernatural basis, that the world is explicable in terms of itself. Scientific truth gets sharply distinguished from belief, which is seen as merely subjective. As Benne points out, from this viewpoint to seek to organize the college curriculum around a coherent Christian perspective (or any holistic worldview, for that matter) is considered suspect because a faith community is then repressing free inquiry and reason. Schools that embraced this viewpoint, thus, abandoned the quest for a Christian mind.

There were also internal factors that fed into the process of

Continued on page 13...

Education



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disengagement from religious roots. Many American schools began as "our school", that is, the school of a community defined by ethnic heritage as much as religion. As these communities sought to become more American, they accommodated to the dominant culture. Little effort was expended to spell out a specifically Christian vision with counter-cultural bite.

Surrendering public dimension of Christianity

Many of the schools that did resist accommodation did so from a fundamentalist and pietist basis. They withstood the temptations of liberal theology and refused to make peace with enlightenment rationalism; however, in the process, religion was narrowed down to worship, private devotion and personal morality. They surrendered the public, intellectual dimensions of the Christian vision. Not just liberalism but pietism, too, ends up relinquishing large tracts of human life to a common realm in which faith plays a negligible role. So it was also a weakness in the Christian vision held by sponsoring churches themselves that led them to disengage from the educational institutions they founded.

In his study of six representative colleges and universities, Benne divides the schools into four categories: orthodox, critical mass, intentionally pluralist and accidentally pluralist. I don't have the room to describe each of these categories; suffice it to say that they move from the least to the most open to secularization. In many ways, Calvin College serves as the touchstone of schools that have withstood the inroads of secularization most effectively for Benne (even though he himself speaks from the Lutheran tradition), and he informs us that schools as diverse as Wheaton (with fundamentalist, evangelical roots), Baylor (southern Baptist) and Notre Dame (Catholic) have been influenced by Calvin's example. The combination of an integrational approach that seeks to infuse every area of study with Christian perspective and the critique of non-Christian worldviews has enabled formerly "two-sphere" schools threatened by secularization to turn things around and recover their own Christian heritage.

Although he criticizes Calvin's homogeneity, Benne holds it up as in many ways a model for how to sustain the "soul" that got lost in American higher education. His account of secularization gives strong clues to what schools must do to keep faith with their religious traditions. They must articulate a systematic and comprehensive vision of the educational enterprise that is philosophically and theologically able to confront humanism.

This vision must be shared by a large segment of the supporting community as well as the administration, faculty and board. The strength of the CRC is mentioned several times in this regard. Calvin's program for making the entire faculty theologically literate is taken as a model for other schools to follow.

Vague Christianity

But the intellectual is not the only level where the battle against secularism must be fought. To remain strong, a Christian college must keep worship central and enforce standards for Christian living among students and faculty. Although Benne suggests Calvin ought to be more open to admitting other Christian traditions on staff, he concedes that "it seems very likely that one can only be a Christian school in the broad sense [he alludes to C.S. Lewis' 'mere Christianity'] if one is anchored in a specific tradition, for a school needs to be held accountable and a vague Christianity lacks the bite of specific claims."

Benne provides many more practical suggestions that are of importance not just to college administrators but to all who are involved in Christian education on every level. The book is accessible and interesting. Because it compares traditions quite different from our own it will greatly enhance our appreciation for institutional structures that we may take for granted. Although Benne doesn't look at Dordt, Trinity, Redeemer and Kings, much of what he says about Calvin applies to them as well. And there are implications for other Christian institutions too, such as *Christian Courier*. Strong institutions can greatly enhance our lives and give broader expression to our faith-life, but they too need to be nurtured.

Our School: Calvin College and the CRC

Two recently published institutional histories can be profitably read alongside Benne's broad study: ***Our School*: Calvin College and the Christian Reformed Church*** by Harry Boonstra is a brief history of Calvin that focuses on a couple of central issues. Most Calvin alumni will especially enjoy the chapter on the shock waves that some of the student shenanigans created in the CRC constituency and the sleepless nights it caused the president and the administration.

I was a student at Calvin the year the infamous *Bananer*, the parody of the *Banner*, was published by students. At the time, I and my fellow students couldn't understand the wrath that this humorous send-up of own traditions kindled among some segments of the CRC. And we didn't take their reactions very seriously. Boonstra devotes a long chapter to describing the many tensions and quarrels between CRC members and Calvin College about student (mis) behavior.

Most of us as students had little or no awareness of how our flouting of some of the conservative standards on worldly amusements (movie attendance and dancing primarily) created huge, long-term headaches for the administration, which was torn between giving enough freedom to the students and acting *in loco parentis* to uphold the Christian ethos parents would insist on at home.

Many, perhaps most, parents who sent their children to Calvin expected the school to supervise their behavior, which meant forbidding movie attendance, among other things. They saw Calvin as "Our School" – an extension of home and church. This was why they kept a close eye on the students. This was the place where the future leaders of the church were being educated and they wanted to be sure that Reformed standards of the Christian life were being instilled.

The teachings of some of the professors at the college and the seminary also came under close scrutiny by a voluble segment of the CRC and caused hours and years of argument and acrimony. CRC supporters were serious and engaged with their theological heritage.

In other words, although an

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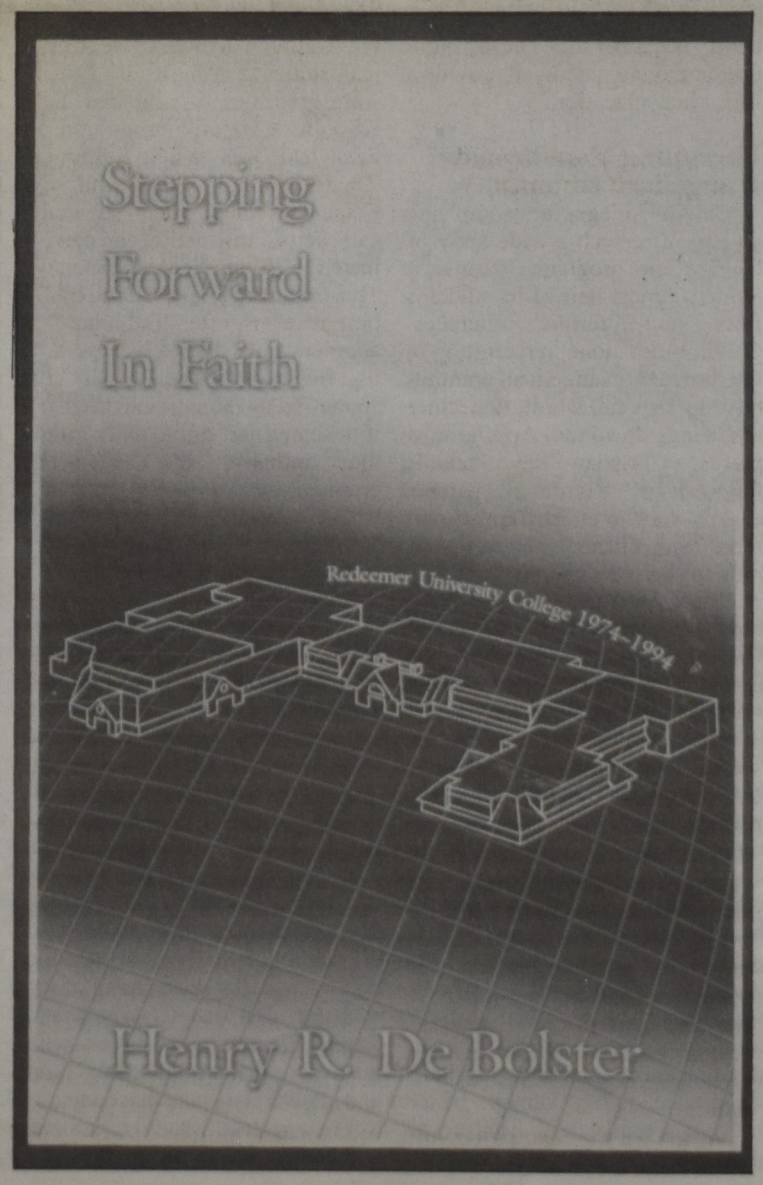


In Memory of John Vriend

Ty Hofman

John Vriend has died. He suffered a fatal heart attack on Feb. 9 and succumbed the next day. He was 76 years old. A memorial service was held for him in the Eastern Avenue CRC in Grand Rapids.

Most readers of CC may not have known of John Vriend, but his passing should be noted and his story told, especially in Canada where he, at one time, was a leading minister. It is possible that this will be the only published notice of his life and service and I have this opportunity to relate it.

At the service, several people talked about what kind of a person John was. They reflected on his brilliance as a man of language, his deep-running theological mind, his insightfulness in the analysis of problems and of the struggle to solve them. They reflected on his gift of friendship. They reflected on his concerns for the marginalized citizens of the kingdom, and his sympathetic understanding of people living on the edge of the faith community, like those with same-sex orientation. He was a man at the cutting edge of the ever-changing life in the Christian fellowship of which he was a part.

They also told about his ineptitude in matters mechanical and, in general, things physical. He was indeed a klutz. I recall that when we ministers played volleyball together on Monday mornings back in the 70s, it was always difficult to make the teams equal because the side that got John always had an insurmountable disadvantage. But his drag on the court was compensated for by his ability to create great conversation over the coffee cups after the game.

The rest of the story

The memorial service did not tell John's whole story. That was obviously the choice of the family in the circumstances, for John's story has its very painful side. And there is enough pain at the time of death — no need to add to it. In this setting, however, that story can be told. It is important that we do so.

John grew up as an immigrant lad on a farm in Houston, B.C. He was near the middle of a family of nine children. He was not able to attend a high school, so he got his education by correspondence. And he excelled. What led him to seek preparation for the ministry of the gospel I do not know. Maybe it was a case of the proverbial farm father who, noticing that his son did not excel in matters agricultural, declared: "Johnny better become a minister — he'll never make a good farmer, anyway."

When John arrived at Calvin College in the late '40s, he was the talk of the campus. He still had the look of a boy out of the bush of northern B.C. He was tall and gangly and appeared dazed at what was going on around him. He always walked with his head cocked a bit to one side, leading one wag to suggest he looked like a robin searching for worms. But he impressed everyone with his able mind and his astounding command of the English language.

He graduated from college and seminary and, with his wife Margaret, entered the ministry of the CRC in Montreal in 1956. He served three other churches in Canada, where he earned the reputation of being a leading theological mind and an excellent preacher as well as a role model for all the young ministers coming into the church. Someone (I do not recall who it was after these many years) once declared that Vriend was the *primus inter pares* of CRC ministers.

Pastoring a 'concept church'

In 1974, the Vriend family arrived in Grand Rapids with seven children and high expectations. John was installed as the first minister of the Church of the Servant, a recently organized "concept church" given the liberty by Classis Grand Rapids East to do all sorts of experimental things in worship and administration. Just the place for a John Vriend. An avant-garde minister had found an avant-garde church and great things were expected. Vriend was riding high. He had served as an officer of synod and represented the CRC as an observer at the meeting of the World Council of Churches meeting in Upsalla, Norway. He was nominated for the editorship of *The Banner* along with Dr. Lester De Koster, who was chosen.

Not long after that, John Vriend got caught up in an illicit relationship with a young woman he was counseling. To make the long story short, he was deposed from the ministry of the CRC. He was not the first nor the last minister to fall into this trap. But John had convinced himself that things were changing in the church; that his consistory would work to break new ground, allowing a minister to divorce and remarry if this was the deep-seated desire and need of the minister; and that Classis Grand Rapids East was a classis with leadership that would see the light and allow him to take that course.

He was dead wrong, of course. His whole world came crashing down on him. He sought refuge in the Presbyterian Church and worked for ordination in it. In that context, he once failed an exam in hermeneutics, a subject on which he knew much more than the examiner. That may explain why he didn't attain to candidacy in that church. Needing something to do, he took up translating Dutch material into English and became a first-class translator. That was his work for the rest of his life.

Vriend never got the CRC out of his system. He did his work in a corner of Calvin College Library and drank coffee every morning with a group of retirees and Bible professors. He frequented most public church gatherings and cultural events. Finally, he decided to come home. He was in the process of seeking CRC membership when he died. Ironically, this former CRC "pope" had to enter an inquirer's class in order to join the Eastern Ave. CRC. There was a time when becoming an inquirer meant seeking to come into the Christian faith.

We live in strange times.

There is much to learn from the life of John Vriend. The main lesson is the need in the life of every person, but especially of ministers, for honest self-discipline. Even the most brilliant can become deluded, and no delusion is so destructive as passion-driven self-delusion. It is to learn that a warm heart for people needing comfort must beat under the light of a biblically informed mind and a stubborn will to do the right. Looking at the fallen from the ranks of the clergy in recent times makes this a terribly urgent message for all who aspire to the high calling of the pastoral ministry. And to look back at the life of John Vriend is to wonder what might have been if he had walked more faithfully. That could be asked whenever a Christian, and especially a minister, fails the test of self-discipline. And it calls for a reality check in the life of each one of us.

Sweet? sixteen

Intangible Things
Heidi VanDerSlikke

Lately I've been looking across the table at this young blonde woman and wondering where the years have gone. It wasn't so long ago that she was my cherub-faced tyke who spent the first day of her life protesting the cold bright world she'd been forced into. She wanted nothing more than to snuggle into my arms and snooze the day away. That was nearly 16 years ago. There are times when I still think she looks angelic. Sleeping the day away remains a preferred activity (although not a feasible option), and her protests are occasionally quite vocal. Our snuggling days are long gone, but once in awhile I do get a spontaneous hug.

Our first-born children were twins and their arrival was heralded with what seemed like non-stop excitement. Frenzied as those early years of parenthood were, suddenly James and Stephanie were nearly five years old and almost off to kindergarten. That's when Jessica arrived. From the start, she was a unique individual with a will of her own.

Quite an adjustment

It was quite an adjustment for the whole family when the new baby came along. As Jess grew, it took some time for James and Stephanie to adapt to her presence. They let the door close on her so many times we wondered if she'd develop a pug nose. However, Jessica was not to be ignored. Not long after she mastered the English language, she informed us that all conversation dealing with life prior to her birth was totally unnecessary and utterly unacceptable. (Okay, those weren't her exact words, but the implication is accurate.)

When her older siblings started school full-time, it was almost as if Jessica was an only child. We were inseparable, She went everywhere with me; strapped into the passenger's seat, feet sticking out over the edge, teddy bear at her side. Her world had one color in it: pink. And she loved animals, especially cats,

For Jessica there was no greater excitement than the arrival of springtime and kittens in the driving shed. She handled them all, fed them all and named them all. One year there were eight kittens out there. When the vet came to do the rabies vaccinations, every last kitten voluntarily approached him and received their shots. On a perfect day, Jess would stuff two or three kittens into the pink basket on the front of her pink bicycle and drive up and down the laneway.

Much as she loved animals, she was not about to be pushed around by them. When Dusty was a boisterous pup, his playful jumping and barking could be intimidating. Jessica would simply make a fist, look him squarely in the eye and demand, "Ya want it Dusty?"

An artistic streak

Jessica has always had an artistic streak, and yet she is a highly efficient person. She's the only child I've ever known who would color an entire coloring book, front to back, one page at a time. She went through a stage where she was sure her name was spelled "JOI", and those three letters appeared on almost anything that didn't move. She loved to work with scissors, glue and paper, and had a special passion for stickers. On one occasion she glued $4.00 worth of postage stamps to her artwork and then proudly presented it to me as a gift. "Look at the stickies I found in your desk, Mommy!"

A goal oriented person, Jessica's current objective is to obtain her driver's license. I have to admit it amuses me that her birthday falls on a Sunday. Therefore she cannot get her license that day. Not only that, she signed up for Driver's Education classes the week following her birthday, so there won't be any opportunity to get her learner's permit until five whole days afterward. This is killing her, but not me. I can wait to see her behind the wheel. It isn't so much that I anticipate rediscovering the purpose of hand grips in the car, it's just that I'm in no hurry for Jessica to reach adulthood.

Fortunately for her, I have no real sway in the matter. The best I can do is go along for the ride. And I am thankful for that privilege. Jessica remains a unique individual with a will of her own. She is growing up into a fine young woman, and I'm proud to be part of that process. Parenting is a wonderful responsibility, but if you do it right, you work yourself out of a job, to some extent. That being said — she'll always be my baby!

Heidi VanDerSlikke lives in Harriston, Ont.

Reflections on Beauty/Humor

The lovely and lowly

John Krueger

I have an affinity with the hobbits in Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*. At just over five foot, four inches I'm a little lower to the ground than most people I know. Yet I suppose I'm not alone in feeling a bit self-conscious. Few of us can echo King David who said we are "fearfully and wonderfully made." Most of us are more aware of our warts than our wonder. And for good reason. Research show that we see an average of 400 to 600 media images each day — many depicting chic, gorgeous people.

Even if you live in a remote village, far from grocery check-out counters, still the beauty culture can hunt you down. Michael Moore filmed an Avon lady who traveled by dugout canoe to bring good looks to Amazonian peasant women. This quirky film documented the sales rep's missionary zeal as she called on a customer who lived in a dirt floor shack. With no door bell to ring, the Avon lady just stepped through a hole in the wall. After some chit chat the two women flipped through a glossy magazine of computer enhanced photos, where lips were made fuller, breasts larger, skin smoother and eyes bluer. Then the Avon lady held up a jar of "Renew," and peddled a promise.

A severe case of self-consciousness

Over-exposure to beauty can create a severe case of self-consciousness. And then it hits us. We learn the limits of how much we can alter our appearance. Our sense that life is unfair may have less to do with wars, disease and dictators. We see injustice when we look in the mirror. As vain as it may sound, our body shape, facial features and eye color are the channel through which we experience inequality most vividly. Studies confirm what we intuitively know. Cathy Newman, writing in *The National Geographic* observes, "At its worst, beauty discriminates.... Attractive people make more money, get called on more often in class, receive lighter court sentences, and are perceived as friendlier. We do judge a book by its cover."

Bad guys are ugly

Young children are taught that the wicked witch or bad guy is the ugly one with scars, a crooked nose and even green skin! The good person is beautiful, like Cinderella or Snow White. Send in the handsome prince and they learn that beauty also wins love. (The computer animated film *Shrek* is a refreshing departure from this tired trend.) No wonder that when many children grow up, they spend thousands of dollars on cosmetic surgery, facelifts and liposuction. Some are diagnosed with anorexia and body dimorphic disorder, which can be derived from an intense hatred of one's appearance. News reporting also reinforces our bias for beauty.

I'm reminded of two public figures who died within a week of each other: Princess Diana and Mother Teresa. By any standard of physical beauty, Diana towered above the tiny nun from Calcutta. The saturated reporting of the Princess's fatal crash eclipsed news coverage of the one who spent more than 50 years ministering to the poorest of the poor. (Of course, Mother Teresa would have wanted it that way.)

Portrayals of Jesus

Even films about Jesus bolster our standard of beauty. Whether it be the blue eyed Robert Powell in *Jesus of Nazareth* or the muscular Brian Deacon in *Jesus*, film producers can't resist a physically compelling Christ. I've yet to see a Jesus film which followed the script written in Isaiah: "He had no form or beauty that we should be attracted to him." The charismatic appeal of the Hollywood Jesus doesn't fit with the one from whom people hid their faces.

At our college formal, I was struck by a student who stood poised at the balcony like Michelle Pfeiffer on Oscar night. One bare arm laid along the brass railing and with the other she waved to friends who entered the banquet hall lobby. This 18-year-old student had utterly transformed herself from the tattered jeans and Nike T-shirt she wore to class that week. The days of shopping for her blue satin evening dress, the hours of putting up her hair, applying L'Oreal blush, Cover Girl Sage eyeliner and Revlon Lagoon mascara, had all beckoned toward this moment.

I had hardly thought about my appearance. Until then. While shuffling toward the coat check I had a kind of out-of-body experience. Actually, I just imagined how I appeared through the eyes of the beauty on the balcony. (As far as I know, only human beings can step outside themselves and see how they appear. My golden retriever can't do this. Perhaps that is why he appears so carefree.) Suddenly I snapped back inside my skin when the crowd broke into hysterics. Five students traipsed through the lobby dressed as Norse Viking women, complete with horned helmets, fur vests, earth-tone skirts and inverted woven plant hangers for braids of hair.

Distressing disguises

Prophets can come to us in the most distressing disguises. I've always been perplexed by their strange antics. Jeremiah buried his waistcloth and smashed an earthen flask to teach Israel about its sin. Ezekiel cut off his hair and then laid on his left side several hours each day as a symbol of the nation's disobedience. Isaiah stripped himself naked and walked barefoot for three years, and Hosea felt called to marry a prostitute. Strange stuff. But that night at our college formal, I understood the power of prophetic actions.

Following the wierdos

My colleagues and I followed the weirdos into the banquet hall and were amused to find that our table was parked right next to theirs. I glanced over my shoulder at these kooks in their outlandish garb. They were not alone. A rag-tag assortment of students sat with them — those who because of size, personality, speech impediment or facial features, were not invited to other tables. The Viking women hadn't mistaken the formal for a masquerade. They were more than jesters at a king's banquet. Like the prophets of old, their actions spoke. Amid the lovely, they chose the lowly.

MIKE SEGAR/REUTERS

By any standard of physical beauty, Diana towered above the tiny nun, Mother Teresa. The saturated reporting of the Princess's fatal crash eclipsed news coverage of the one who spent more than 50 years ministering to the poorest of the poor.

John Krueger is a career counselor and remedial composition instructor at Redeemer University College in Ancaster, Ont.

Short course in Chinese

Frank De Vries

That's not right *Sum Ting Wong*
Are you harboring a fugitive? *Hu Yu Hai Ding?*
See me ASAP *Kum Hia Nao*
Stupid man *Dum Gai*
Small horse *Tai Ni Po Ni*
Did you go to the beach? *Wai Yu So Tan?*
I bumped into the coffee table *Ai Bang May Ni*
I think you need a face lift *Chin Tu Fat*
It's very dark in here *Wai So Dim?*
I thought you were on a diet *Wai Yu Mun Ching?*
This is a tow-away zone *No Pah King*
You know the lyrics to the Macarena? *Wai Yu Sing Dum Song?*
You are not very bright *Yu So Dum*
I got this for free *Ai No Pei*
Please stay a while longer *Wai Go Nao?*
Our meeting is scheduled for next week *Wai Yu Kum Nao?*
They have arrived *Hia Dei Kum*
Staying out of sight *Lei Ying Lo*
He's cleaning his automobile *Wa Shing Ka*

Education

Musings of a member of the CRC in a secular university

Gerry Gerrits

A few years ago a cadet counselor at our church asked me to speak to the boys about what it means to be a Christian in my job as professor of European history, with a specialization in Medieval, Renaissance and Reformation history, at Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. I don't think that I exactly bowled the boys over with my little presentation, but subsequently it led me to do some more thinking about this question: how exactly am I applying my Christian principles in my teaching position?

To begin with, my own research specialty is, broadly speaking, the history of the Medieval church and religion, so the very material I teach also lends itself admirably to devoting a great deal of attention to the history of church and religion, because in the Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation they were all important forces: i.e., from about 500 to 1650 A.D. In the past, some students have objected, in class as well as in my office, to the amount of time I devote to the history of Christianity during those centuries, while others have voiced the opinion that they would like to hear more about it, so I decided not to make any changes in this respect.

DAN CALLIS/*MACLEANS*

Students take a study break outdoors at Acadia University in Wolfville, N.S.

Religion a taboo topic

It must be kept in mind that a large majority of the students at Acadia University come from public high schools where it is strictly taboo to mention the topic of religion in any form or context. Consequently, over the years I have observed with interest the reaction on students' faces, especially the reaction on the faces of first-year students, when lecturing on topics that require an account and analysis of various aspects of the Christian faith. Some students are obviously pleasantly surprised to hear me broach the topics I do, and that is most encouraging. Some others will look dumbfounded, or even shocked, and perhaps wonder why I am not being fired on the spot, and then there are always some who are clearly hostile to what I have to say.

And just last year I incurred the wrath of one student not because of what I said about the history of Christianity, but about the origins of Islam. She informed me that her friend was a Muslim who had told her all about its origins and that I was telling a lot of fables and should, consequently, keep quiet. However, by the end of the term I had won her confidence to the point where she was convinced of my objectivity — to the extent that is possible — on that issue, as well as others.

Christianity generates most discussion

My experience has also been that the history of Christianity generates more discussion and debate in class than any other historical topic, which may have to do with how I teach the history of Christianity. Students have told me that I teach it with greater enthusiasm than I do other topics, but that does not appear to be the sole answer. Many students are genuinely interested in Christianity, and I was really surprised some years ago when a discussion about predestination went on for more than an hour.

While some students know a fair amount about the Bible and the teachings of the Christian faith, most know very little, even if they are interested. Allusions to the Bible usually draw blank stares, and some of my colleagues have made the same observation. In fact, some years ago a student in a Medieval history course came up to me after class and asked me, "What is the Bible?" I was somewhat surprised to hear that from this particular student since he came from what might be called Nova Scotia's Bible belt. When I related this to other members in the Department, they too were highly surprised, which perhaps suggests that we are living in more of a post-Christian world than we generally realize. Some time after this student had come to me with his question, it dawned on me that I had let a wonderful opportunity slip by to hand him a copy of the Bible.

Because of what I teach, and perhaps the perspective from which I teach it, students can at times become quite personal with regard to their own faith and mine. For example, once a student came up to me after class and informed me that he had become a born-again Christian the previous weekend, something which surprised me on two counts: this was a very quiet, unassuming individual, and he was a Catholic, and I, at least, tend not to associate that kind of religious experience with Catholics. In any case, I was not quite prepared for that kind of 'confession', and I cannot say that I felt at ease with it, which is probably a reflection on my (Christian) Reformed background.

Over the years, a number of students have asked me point-blank whether I am a Christian, because I do not, unlike a former colleague, announce as much in the first class of the year or the term and tell the students that, as a consequence, I also teach from a Christian perspective. Then, only a few years ago, I had a student, also a Catholic (with a Baptist girlfriend for which, he told me, his grandmother had thoroughly scolded him) ask me whether I have ever had a mystical experience, to which I had to answer that I unfortunately had not (although I probably would like to). He claimed to have had one (which was perhaps consistent with his Catholic background), and I got the impression that, in his opinion, I did not quite measure up since I could not claim to ever have had such an experience. One or two students with a fundamentalist background left me with the impression that in the matter of religion I am, in their opinion, a liberal lightweight.

A Baptist background

Keep in mind that Acadia University has a Baptist background, and before it was secularized in 1965, all arts majors had to take a half course in Biblical studies. I am not quite certain why that was not required of science majors. After secularization, the Atlantic Baptist Convention retained the right to appoint a relatively large number of members to the Board of Governors, and that remains the situation to this day.

Beyond that, religion still has a fairly visible presence on campus in the form of a chapel which occupies a prominent place, and here again the University's origin comes into play. The chapel, a beautiful Georgian structure with a Casavant organ, was a gift in the early 1960s from a graduate who had done well financially. The University has its own chaplain, paid by the University, and Mondays through Fridays there are two services in the chapel daily: at 11:30 in the morning, and at 6 in the evening, and the services are announced by a real bell in the belfry.

Although that is no longer the case now, years ago at least half of the members in my Department were practicing Christians, ranging from Catholic to Baptist, and from Anglican to Christian Reformed (myself). Furthermore, some years the Acadia Christian Fellowship is the largest student club on campus. A student told me a few years ago that many students are looking for spiritual meaning and fulfilment in their lives. When I hear that, I have to wonder whether churches are doing enough to reach out to such young people.

Died on his wedding night

Needless to say, not all students have their mind on religion, and quite often on other matters. About five years ago I was telling my Western Civilization class about how Attila, king of the Huns, died on the wedding night of his third marriage (this was in 453 A.D.). As I was relating this, a student raised her arm and asked whether he had died before or after. Surmising where this was going, and thinking that this was not a proper question for a young lady, I asked innocently — although I must admit that my innocence was somewhat feigned — "Before or after what?" in response to which I got a Trudeauesque shrug of the shoulder as if to say: "Get with it you old geezer," by which time the class was a-titter with suppressed mirth.

While students come to my office mostly to discuss academic matters, I have learned over the years that personal issues and problems cannot be separated from their studies. Life cannot be compartmentalized. Once a 20-year-old young man broke down in my office because his parents were divorcing. That was traumatic enough in itself, but it was also making it impossible for him to concentrate on his work, and he was afraid that he was going to lose the year.

Then there was a first year student, a beautiful, unmarried young woman who came into my office in October to tell me that if she should walk out of class in the morning it was because she was pregnant and suffering from morning sickness. After that I saw her in class two or three times, and then she never came again. I have wondered at times whether she kept the baby, whether she had an abortion, and whether I should have done more to reach out to her, because when she came to see me she was obviously confused and distressed.

Embarrassing situations

One can also be put into somewhat embarrassing situations. Once a female student, who had had an abdominal operation, lifted her blouse to show me the incision. That was before the days of e-mail, and it was one time that I would have welcomed it.

On balance, however, the coming of e-mail has not been an unmixed blessing, for students now have a tendency to communicate with their professors by e-mail, rather than seeing them in person, and that I think is unfortunate. For discussions about academic problems often lead to personal talks which can be most satisfying to both parties. But I understand that in many instances it is less painful to send an e-mail than to face the 'lion' in his den.

In summary, I would not like to claim that I have brought students to accept Christ, provided that that is even possible. What I do think I have managed to get across in many instances is that we do not have to be ashamed of the Gospel, and that even professors can be practicing Christians, for that in itself is a revelation to not a few students. So, I like to think that I have not been a drone in God's kingdom altogether, but only He knows for certain.

Gerry Gerrits, Ph. D. is a member of the Kentville Christian Reformed Church and Associate Professor at Acadia University

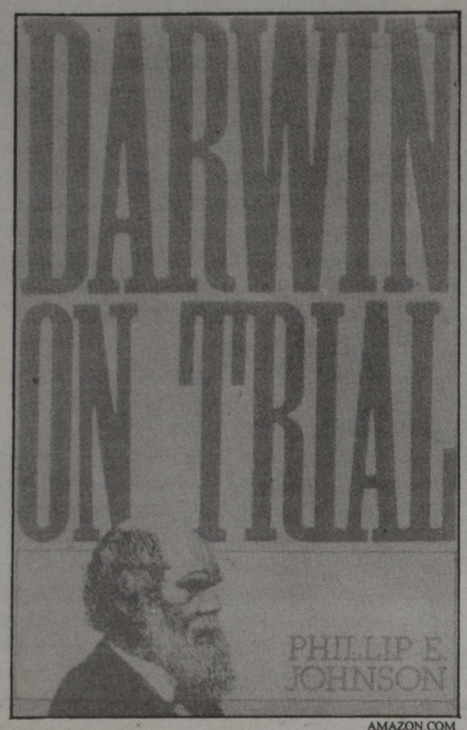
Education News

Academic freedom makes evolution's days numbered

Michael Foust

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — The future of Darwinian evolution is limited because its opponents have two major factors on their side — academic freedom and truth, said Phillip E. Johnson during a recent lecture at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Johnson, professor of law at the University of California at Berkeley and author of *Darwin on Trial*, said it is only a matter of time before evolution opponents win the day in the academic setting.



AMAZON.COM

Phillip Johnson's Book, Darwin on Trial, *challenges the theory of evolution.*

Best arguments on our side

"We have the best arguments on our side," Johnson said. "We have the principles of academic freedom on our side — the principles of freedom of expression and freedom of thought.... When the scientific evidence is argued on a level playing field with all the possibilities being able to be considered, intelligent design is going to win. It's not going to win because we're the most brilliant arguers. It's not going to win because we have certain tricks to play. It's going to win because that's the truth. It's going to win because the evidence supports that position."

During the three-day event, entitled "Equiping for Ministry in Today's University Culture," Johnson commented on recent controversies that resulted in pro-evolution victories. At Baylor University last year, the faculty succeeded in pressuring the administration to remove intelligent design proponent William Dembski from a campus-based research centre. In Kansas last fall, conservatives lost three seats on the Kansas State Board of Education, resulting in evolution language being reinserted in state tests. It had been removed the year before.

Intelligent design will win

Intelligent design — the belief that the universe was created by an outside, intelligent force (God) — will win in the end, Johnson said. But first, it must be given a fair hearing.

"Academic freedom — freedom of thought, freedom of expression — is the most bedrock principle of our movement," he said. "It's unchallengeable. It's every bit as important as the idea of intelligent design in biology itself. The reason is that all we need to do is get the idea on the table and it will prevail.... The other side knows that. That's why they're so desperate to prevent it from getting on the table."

Contrary to popular belief, Johnson said intelligent design proponents do not want to censor Darwinian evolutionists.

"What we're trying to do is prevent censorship," he said. "We're trying to have [an] open liberal conversation, and it's the other side that wants to produce a dogma and not allow any criticism over it."

For such a movement to succeed, intelligent design proponents in the academic world must join forces with the political world, Johnson said. Support is needed from students as well as parents. However, everyone must be knowledgeable.

"You don't want to have a wild mob descend on the university and act in some ridiculous manner," he said. "We want people prepared. What they do — if they do it really intelligently — is they stand up for academic freedom. That's all they have to do, and that's the easiest thing in the world to defend."

Johnson said a defense of intelligent design could be as simple as arguing, "'Is that a university, where you shut down ideas because you're afraid they might be convincing?' It's that kind of argument that ... we need."

Frustrated at evangelicals' lack of boldness

In an interview between lectures, Johnson said he has grown increasingly frustrated at evangelicals' lack of boldness in defending their faith. modern evangelicals have so focused on bare emotion and "winning the heart" that they are no longer contending intellectually for the faith in the public square.

"I am frustrated by many evangelicals who are indifferent to ideas, who don't understand that ideas have consequences," he said. "[Many] think they can preserve their faith by walling off a Christian subculture and somehow keep that independent of the mainstream culture — the public schools, the television networks and so on.

"Of course, that mainstream culture infiltrates that Christian subculture, and the Christians have no defenses when it does. Their immune systems are inactive because they have not tested themselves against the infections from the mainstream culture. What happened in the 20th century is that Christians largely abandoned the whole world of ideas and the academic world and the public stage in general to agnostics, to the evolutionary naturalists."

Helping equip Christians

Johnson addresses audiences in both secular and religious schools as well as churches. He hopes to aid evangelicals in proclaiming the truths of their faith with confidence and avoid being intimidated by supposed "scientific evidence" that debunks the Christian doctrine of creation.

"[Christians] are pretty good with feelings and the heart, but not so good with ideas and facts and knowledge," he said. "There is no reason why Christians have to be dumb. They can be well-educated, they can be very smart and they actually have a better starting place than the other side does.

"What I want to do is to help them take on that job, to realize that they can do it very well if they are willing to discipline themselves to learn what they need to learn. The goal of the conference is to arm and equip people like that and to encourage them so they can create out of the student generation a whole new army of young people who can make an effective Christian witness and who know what a good argument is."

Bought into false belief

Johnson believes many Christians have bought into the false belief that religion and science are polar opposites; a great deal of them unwittingly hold to secular ideas that are diametrically opposed to orthodox Christianity.

"I think many of them are often completely confused about this, so they believe the Bible when they are with Bible people and they believe science when they are with science people," he said.

Johnson sees the doctrine of creation as the natural starting point for Christian witness. He said "creationism" is a derisive term which evolutionary naturalists use in attempts at demeaning evangelicals.

"The secular world tells us that it's a simple fact that the creating was done by nature and that's why the whole concept of sin, for example, has dropped out of their vocabulary; it doesn't make any sense when you were created by natural forces that don't care what you do."

Johnson said it is critical for Christians to point out irrational beliefs within Darwinian evolution, such as the concept that man simply evolved from nothing. This, he said, fails to connect with reality. Johnson added that beginning with a sovereign Creator who designs the universe according to his well-ordered plan is much more consistent with the world around us.

Evangelicals need not be intimidated by those who rail against the faith by saying science has given mankind all the answers to ultimate reality, Johnson said. He urged Christians to study their own doctrines and be able to speak up for what they believe and why they believe it.

Seminar will study role of public reason in our democracy

TORONTO — Dr. Jonathan Chaplin, who teaches political theory at the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto is announcing a graduate-level course to be offered in Toronto, June 6-21.

The course is co-sponsored by the Calvin College philosophy department and the Institute for Christian Studies. If you would like a copy of the brochure or are interested in the course, please contact him directly at **jchaplin@icscanada.edu**.

Fiercely contested role of public religion

This collaborative advanced-level seminar for graduate students and younger faculty addresses the fiercely contested role of public religion in contemporary liberal democracies. Against the background of current debates about toleration, pluralism and 'public reason' in social and political theory, it examines contending conceptions of the public role of religion in both secular liberal and Christian thinkers. The seminar will explore constructive models of religious engagement in public life which respect religious plurality while avoiding the illusions of liberal neutrality.

A highlight of the seminar will be a public dialogue between Professors Nicholas Wolterstorff (Yale Divinity School) and Paul Weithman (Notre Dame) sponsored by Pew Trusts.

Jonathan Chaplin has served as Associate Professor of Political Theory at the Institute for Christian Studies since 1999. He is a graduate of Oxford University and received his Ph.D. from the University of London. Prior to his appointment, he taught at four institutions of higher education in the UK. He specializes in the field of Christian political theory, is co-editor of *Political Theory and Christian Vision*, and is completing a book on the political thought of the 20th-century Dutch Christian philosopher Herman Dooyeweerd. His publications include articles on religion and liberalism, Christian conceptions of the state, democracy pluralism, and Catholic and evangelical political thought. He is a member of the Pew Study Group on Politics and Human Nature, the Distinguished Advisory Panel of the 'Civitas' Program based at the Center for Public Justice in Washington, D.C., and Chair of the Board of the Public Justice Resource Centre in Toronto. Chaplin has also served as a member of the Social Action Commission of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada and the Theology Committee of the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative.

For more information, contact:
ICS, 229 College Street, Suite 200,
Toronto, ON, M5T 1R4
Telephone: 416-979-2331
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Facsimile: 416-979-2332
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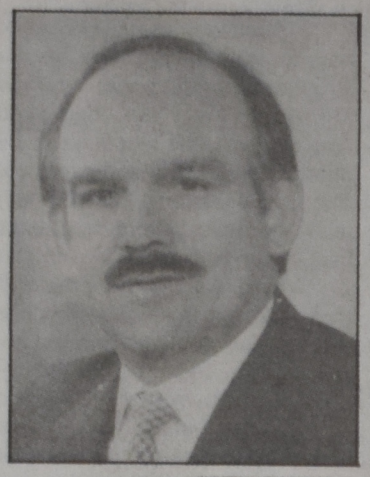
Cross-border broodings

Calvin College profs must send their children to Christian schools



CHRISTIAN COURIER FILES

Calvin College President Gaylen Byker

Ty Hofman

Calvin College is formally owned and operated by the Christian Reformed Church in North America though that is not exactly the proper business of the organized church. But it has worked well for generations and most are happy with the status quo. That has some implications, one of which is that the position of the Christian Reformed Church on Christian education and Christian schools is the standard also for Calvin College.

It's in the contract

Calvin College has a rule that Christian school participation is required for those who are employed with faculty status by the Board of Trustees. They accept their positions at Calvin with the knowledge that they are by that token required to send their children to a Christian school associated with Christian Schools International. It's in the contract.

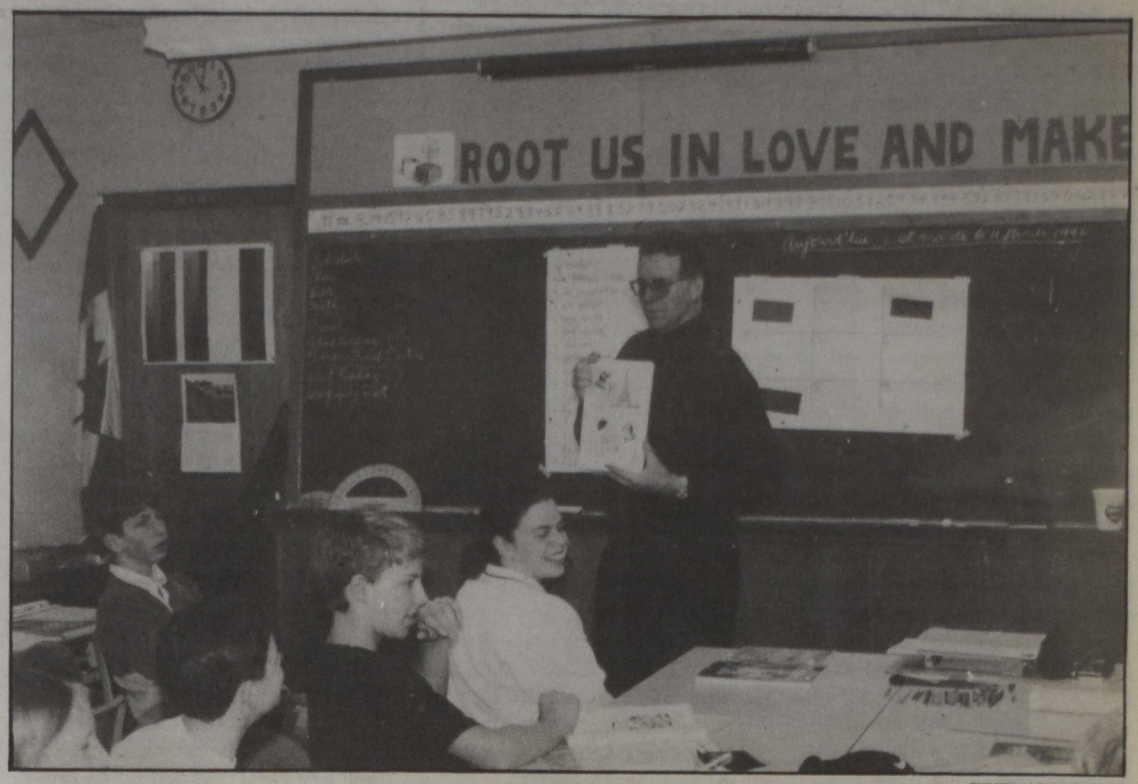
Now not everyone being employed at Calvin is equally enthusiastic about complying with this requirement. And some people are employed with the tacit assumption, sometimes acknowledged in the hiring process, that there are exceptions to the rule — which there are — and that they may not have to comply. What those exceptions are is somewhat irrelevant to what I am writing about, but allowing exceptions is valid to meet the needs of the child. The bottom line is that the college has a very generous policy of helping where there is financial need and so on, but the administration ultimately determines whether a requested concession is granted. Seems fair enough.

Recently a person serving Calvin College as a counselor to students, Robert Reed, requested permission to send his children to a public school in the area of an inner-city Christian Reformed church of which he is a member. His reason for seeking an exception to the rule is that he has a heart for the inner city and wants to do his part in ministering to it as a member of this congregation. To do that, as I understand it, he believes his children must attend the neighborhood public school so that his family will be identified with the people they are trying to help. Sending his children to a Christian school (one also in the inner-city, by the way) would cause enough offense to warrant his seeking an exception to Calvin's rule.

Even a cursory examination of that argument would lead one to be happy he is not teaching philosophy or logic at the college. But he seems to make this love argument sincerely. And he apparently was thoroughly convinced of his position for he chose to leave, rather than to conform. That, of course, was his choice.

Request for exception denied

His request for exception to the rule was denied though he pressed it right up to President Gaylen Byker and the Board of Trustees. By that time, his cause had become the hot button issue among the Calvin faculty, with e-mail argumentation going on hot and heavy for weeks. There are many professors who vehemently disagree with the administration, while others firmly support it. I am not party to knowing what the percentages are, pro and con. Calvin has a very diverse faculty, all part of the demand of a multicultural approach, also at Calvin. The faculty are not all home-grown people who can be depended on to see the logic of the school standing by what it believes and is committed to. But it is altogether likely that some of the home-grown will be as far off the mark as some who have recently joined the ranks are solidly supportive.



CHRISTIAN COURIER FILES

Calvin College is sticking with its rule that its faculty should send their children to local Christian schools.

But the brouhaha was not confined to the faculty and the administration. Things like this have a way of leaking out to the press, and in Grand Rapids that means headlines when Calvin has problems. It should be said immediately that the *Grand Rapids Press* is generally very fair and sympathetic to Calvin College and the Christian Reformed Church. Charles Honey, the religion editor, is both knowledgeable and appreciative of the Reformed community and did a good job in covering this issue. But there is a not-so-appreciative public out there that is quick to criticize and charge bad motivation for hewing to the line on this application of Calvin's rules. It is as though they have a vested interest in the college which gives them the right to make sweeping judgments and give unsolicited advice to Calvin's administration. Amazing!

But the action didn't stop there. Reed's church council took the matter to Classis Grand Rapids East, asking it to become involved. After initially requesting the Classis to ask the Board of Trustees of the CRC to reinstate Reed, the council refocused its request on a discussion of the rule and its application. By this time, Calvin College had also appointed a study committee to look into the whole matter of the application of the rule, and the Classis decided to wait for the May report of Calvin's committee before taking further action. This also brought the goings-on at the Classis meeting into the *G.R. Press,* which cited a few ministerial remarks which looked highly embarrassing in print.

A strange quiet

In all of this, there is a strange quiet on the part of the people who have the most at stake in the Christian school issue. The "bully pulpits" at the disposal of CRC leadership have yet to be heard from. That is not surprising since we lived through a debilitating schism with essentially the same kind of silence, as though doing nothing would cause the evil to go away. And there is much to tell about the CRC and its inner city loyalty and involvement which includes a fine Christian school ministry.

All of this does say something about the place of the Christian schools in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and it is not a cheerful scene. The Christian school is in an attendance crisis, with declining enrollment and escalating costs. The decline is not because there are no students (though the population is not growing), nor that it costs too much (though that is, and has always been, a factor), but because too many parents are finding it simpler and more convenient to choose a "good" public school where there are good teachers, many of them Christians. Escalating that trend is the availability of public schools where morals are being taught, namely, at charter schools which are financed by the public school system but administered privately. No religion, mind you, but morals. And an increasingly ignorant Christian school clientele, that doesn't really understand the "Why?" for Christian schools is plaguing the support community with a large question mark.

Desperately needed

In this situation, the kingdom desperately needs people like President Gaylen Byker who see the principles involved and the trends, and are willing to stand up and be counted in the midst of the drift to multiculturalism and secularization threatening the kingdom of God.

And as for the people employed by Calvin, it ought to be very simple — the rule is clear, the policy is basic; the freedom to choose to teach at Calvin involves going with the policy or finding a more compatible place to work. And there are plenty of people who would like to work at Calvin College, so they should make room if it is not for them!

Tymen Hofman is Yankee-Canuck and retired minister of the Christian Reformed Church who lives in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Food..? For Thought..??

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News Comment

Nose for News

Bert Hielema

THE U.S.A. LOVES GUNS and loves butter. In Hitler's Germany the choice was butter or guns, because the regime there, bent on revenging the humiliation of losing the first phase of the 20th World War, could not afford both. This is not the matter in Mighty America. It is convinced that it can have the cake and eat it too. So the gun-people have budgeted $2 trillion (that is $2 million-million) spread out over five years to finance its killing arsenal, including new additions to its wondrous weaponry.

I admit, in Afghanistan the Americans used some real neat stuff (if you can call it that) such as the Predator, a drone. For the uninitiated: a drone is not a dull speaker's voice, but a remotely controlled plane outfitted with high-tech cameras and equipped with missiles. People on the ground see what the drone sees and when a suspicious object or person is in view, a precise projectile can be launched. It proved a neat killer-toy.

So reasonable people would expect the Pentagon to order more of this sort of effective military machinery and forget about the old-fashioned kind. But, that's not how politics works.

General Eisenhower, on leaving the presidency 45 years ago, warned against the military-industrial complex. Well, it's still there, as potent as ever. Retired generals and admirals get lucrative positions with the arms producers to promote their wares. A drone costs only $3 million, chicken feed for these fellows. The real money is in the heavy-metal stuff. Never mind that it is useful only in yesterday's wars. So, thanks to effective lobbying, the Pentagon has proposed to buy some 500 80-ton self-propelled howitzers — too heavy to be ferried in a plane — at a cost of $23 million each, for a total price tag of more than the entire Canadian Army's budget for a year: $11 billion (US). This amount is dwarfed by the $63 billion budgeted for 295 stealth fighters — $214 million apiece — a plane designed 20 years ago when Russia was a threat. But that's where the real butter is.

ALL THIS MAKES NO sense, of course, but then wars make no sense anyway. Hitler only caused more deaths, including his own. Osama will go the same way. But one thing about wars: wars mean money. Vested interests, prodded by powerful politicians whose job is on the line every other year, are more interested in keeping employment high in their home base, even if it means war. Bush, with "a war" in progress, knows that voting against the military shopping list is seen as unpatriotic.

The U.S. has five percent of the world's population and accounts for 40 per cent of global military spending. Its arms technology has left friends and potential foes so far behind that it needs no allies, no partners, no other nations to impose its will on the world.

Result: a possible U.S. world dictatorship. Already it treats poor nations with contempt, sees aid to Africa as unjustified welfare. All this makes the Rest Of the World unhappy with Uncle Sam, who increasingly looks like a bullying step-father.

WE KNOW WHAT PRIDE cometh before. In spite of all its bravado, economically, America is quite vulnerable. Its clout is based on the role of its dollar as the world's reserve currency, making it possible to finance its huge trade deficits. On a much grander scale, the U.S.A. uses the same tricky and deceptive accounting practices that made Enron, for a short time, the darling of the stock market. One day the world will call in the untold trillions of U.S. foreign debt and then the house of cards of the U.S. economy — based on debt — will come crashing down. It is impossible to predict when this will be but that it will come is beyond doubt. Its economic logic is as flawed as its environmental reasoning.

I write this while being in the U.S.A. where I hear "God bless America" on a daily basis. To me, it seems that this god is Economic Growth. Only if Economic Growth continues — an impossibility — will America be blessed and be able to continue. Only Economic Growth will give America peace. Bush, justifying the Kyoto refusal, proclaimed that only more Economic Growth will solve the problem of harmful emissions. We might as well say that only when we eat more can we control our weight.

AMERICA REMINDS ME of the Japanese miracle: Its stock market in 1990 reached a value of 49 per cent of all the world's stock markets combined. The index then was 40,000. Japan, also in a fit of hubris, called us in the West intellectually and morally inferior, not unlike the U.S.A. today. Now the Nikkei stands at 10,000. Thanks to immense government borrowings, Japan has so far prevented the day of reckoning, but any day now the straw that will break the camel's back will be added and when this happens its — and our — shaky foundation will be exposed.

Today America is also on top of the world. So why not exploit that and go all the way, all the way to Baghdad!

Why not? After all the war against Al-Qaeda is a curious one: no defined enemy, no defined country, no defined target because the adversary is everywhere or nowhere, which makes the entire affair strictly cloak and dagger, one of disguise and primitive weapons. The opponent speaks a language hardly understood by the CIA. The Taliban depends on affiliations based on tribal loyalty and lifelong acquaintance, which makes infiltrating its ranks almost impossible, even though the young American, John Walker Lindh, managed it quite easily. A smart CIA operator, with the same story, could have done the same. Now the naive man is on trial for his life.

THE AMERICAN PUBLIC is used to instantaneous results. Wonder drugs. Miracle measures. America is a nation of the Now. It gets restless when matters take a little while, and terrorism takes a little while. More than a little while. A terrorist might be hidden, be a mole for years, then suddenly pop up out of nowhere and do his dirty work, which might kill thousands and perhaps ten thousands. No, the U.S. doesn't like fighting phantoms. Too indefinite. So it is looking for a nation to fight and what better target than The Other Evil, Saddam Hussein.

There is a man made for TV. Cruel. Ruthless. Perfect for the tube. He even looks like the Russian Madman, Stalin, with his bushy moustache. He may have nuclear weapons — something to discuss in lengthy interviews — certainly has all sorts of chemical poison, so there is lots of potential for disaster, and disaster is the media's great friend. The U.S. thinks he is a threat. Not Europe and the Arab World, which fears trouble in the oil fields.

You may remember that 10 years ago — when Hussein was driven out of Kuwait by the troika of Papa Bush, Colin Powell, then Chief of Staff, now Secretary of State, and Don Cheney, then-Secretary of Defense or better of Offense, now Vice President — he set 500 oil wells on fire, a spectacular sight. Then, the consensus was that Hussein better stay put because the Arab friends feared destabilizing the region with the balance of power swinging to Iran.

Now, young Bush is in a fighting mood, obsessed with the Axis of Evil. Wars mean votes. Not the war on terror, but a real war with shooting bullets and planes streaking and tanks rolling. Motion is what pictures are all about.

CAUTIOUS COLIN WANTS to try to fight Iraq from within, by undermining the army. He called a conference of exiled generals and other fugitives from Hussein to probe that angle. The Pentagon is gung ho on massing troops at the borders of Turkey in the north and Kuwait in the south, and then using the same tactic that proved so successful in Afghanistan: precision bombing; commando raids; special forces infiltration, using the inside opposition. Not an easy matter, all this. Iraq is quite a way from Afghanistan — Iran lies in between — and, since Iran has the dubious honor to be included in the Axis of Evil, it will not regard an invasion into Iraq too kindly. It might be next.

EVEN AL GORE HAS declared himself in favor of an Iraqi excursion, echoing the sentiment of most Americans. Who knows, the war may cause the economy to pick up. Some people will remember that World War II cured the depression of the 1930s. Who knows, another kick at an enemy might bring in the good times again.

Here is a thought: the old name of Iraq is Mesopotamia. The Euphrates is located there, one of the rivers circling the Garden of Eden, Paradise, where Adam and Eve dwelled. It is the cradle of civilization. The Tower of Babel, too, is within its borders, another biblical landmark. There, the people of old — all speaking the same tongue — wanted to build a structure that would reach to heaven, a permanent sign of human superiority. In order to prevent that, and cause the people to migrate to different parts of the world, God confused their language.

Again we have a human structure way up in the satellite-filled sky; again we have one language that dominates the business world; one language that dominates science and entertainment and sports: English with an American accent. Again we have a Tower of Babel: our media, the computer-dominated world with its e-mail and instantaneous communication, the omni-present television. Genesis 11 relates that "God saw that nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them." Again, that same human hubris. Will world history finish where it started?

Bert Hielema lives in Tweed, Ont. These musings reach you from Minneapolis-St. Paul.

Beneficial animals

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- News Canada

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Education/News

Christian schools and the loss of identity

... *continued from page 13*
engaged, committed supporting community is a bulwark against secularization, it also has a downside. Perhaps it doesn't allow sufficient room for an educational institution to critically examine and test the boundaries of its founding tradition. It certainly gives rise to never ending tensions between the inherently conservative supporting community and a faculty and student body that is bound to be more exploratory and critical.

Should a church own a college?

No doubt many parents, relatively uneducated themselves, a large number farmers, had little inkling of the ideal of Christian scholarship; they were more concerned that their children get an education in a safe environment, one that coincided with the values of home. As early as 1932, then president R.B. Kuiper, a very conservative man himself, complained that enforcing rules against worldly amusements was a nigh to impossible task – and this was when the student body was comparatively tiny. For Calvin to become the kind of institution it has become, with an influence out of all proportion to its size, it had to stretch the parochial, ethnic and sectarian skin.

Another issue that Boonstra traces is the long running debate at CRC synods beginning early in the 20th century about whether it was proper for the church to own a college. The objections were, of course, spawned by the Kuyperian notion of sphere sovereignty, which holds that a church and a school each have their own inner nature and structure and should therefore not be administered in the same way. Although synod concurred with this idea, it kept repeating that the time was not "ripe" for giving the school its independence. There's no doubt in my mind, from reading Boonstra's succinct history, that the close bond between the CRC and "Our School" helped to safeguard its Reformed identity; however, at times it also made life exceedingly difficult for the college's president and administration as it was held responsible for a task it could not carry out, namely, to be both parent and pastor to the student body.

Stepping Forward in Faith

Henry de Bolster's history of the founding of Redeemer, ***Stepping Forward in Faith***, is a different sort of history altogether. It is a very personal account written by the man who helped set the process in motion from its very first steps and who was its president. It is a detailed history of the immensely arduous and complicated process of getting a Christian college started against all sorts of obstacles. Besides some honest and personal soul-searching, the book also provides lots of facts, figures and documents.

The central theme undoubtedly is the Lord's providence in the almost impossible enterprise. But read in the light of Benne's book, one can detect another thread as well. One of the biggest obstacles to getting Redeemer established was the Enlightenment frame of mind among academics and politicians alike which rendered them unable to see how a genuine liberal arts education can be rooted in the Christian faith. The prevailing assumption is that religion creates a stultifying bias that is contrary to an ethos of free inquiry and that restricts academic freedom.

Although we Kuyperians like to speak of the public dimension of faith among ourselves, we have not rubbed shoulders enough with the intellectual and political leaders outside our community to make our vision known.

Having a powerful impact

In recent years, however, institutions like redeemer and Kings (and Western in B.C.) are having a powerful impact; they are beginning to reshape the Canadian understanding of the relation between religion and public life in positive ways. This, evangelical Bible schools were unable to do because they more or less accepted the "two-spheres" approach, which separated personal piety from scholarship and life in the public sphere.

Another book that contributes a great deal to deepening our understanding on this score is Anthony Diekema's book, ***Academic Freedom and Christian Scholarship***. Diekema is the former president of Calvin College, so it is appropriate to mention his book here, but I can do no more than recommend it. Besides developing a definition of academic that applies to teachers, he shows that schools as a whole require academic freedom to flourish. They cannot be merely extensions of the home or of the church but need a certain autonomy. Such a model would greatly alleviate the tensions between the school and its concerned and committed supporting community.

Quality with Soul: How Six Premier Colleges and Universities Keep Faith with Their Religious Traditions, by **Robert Benne**, is published by William B. Eerdmans in Grand Rapids, Mich. 217 pages.

Our School, by **Harry Boonstra**, is published by William B. Eerdmans in Grand Rapids, Mich. 155 pages.

Stepping Forward in Faith, by **Henry De Bolster**, is published by Guardian Books in Belleville, Ont.. 283 pages.

Move to allow homosexual ordinations defeated in U.S. Presbyterian church

Cheryl Heckler

OXFORD, Ohio (ENI) — Opponents of the ordination of openly gay and lesbian clergy in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are celebrating the defeat of an amendment to church law that would have allowed homosexuals to hold positions of authority in the denomination.

"I was overjoyed. I was delighted," said Tom Sweets, organizer of the conservative Presbyterian Coalition's campaign to defeat the amendment. "This says we still honor the Scripture and our tradition despite the message coming from the world pressuring a change. I was very proud of our denomination."

Not about excluding homosexuals

Sweets, who is senior pastor at the Madeira-Silverwood Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati, Ohio, told ENI: "This is not about excluding homosexuals from the church. But the point is, who do we lift up as officers in the church?"

The denomination's general assembly voted last year to amend a church law that prevents non-celibate homosexuals serving as church office holders, such as ministers or elders. However, the decision required approval by a majority of the church's 173 presbyteries, the denomination's local legislative bodies.

On February 19, the PCUSA received the 87th and deciding presbytery vote against the amendment, thereby ruling out, for the moment at least, the ordination of homosexuals.

However, supporters of the general assembly's decision to change church law have promised a continued presence and fight within the church.

Staying in the church

Mitzi Henderson, co-moderator of More Light Presbyterians, which supports the full participation in church life by gays and lesbians, told ENI: "We have been aware that no matter how the votes go at the national level, it's what happens in the local church that makes a difference. That's why we are a grass-roots organization."

She said: "We are going to stay in the church, and we will continue what we've been doing for years — working with pastors, educating within the congregations and organizing there to bring home the experiences of gay and lesbian, transgender and transsexual individuals."

Church law states that church officers must "live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman, or chastity in singleness."

Sweets said: "That is a wonderful thumbnail sketch of biblical morality, and it looks to me like the denomination is making up its mind on this issue."

Looking anew at the Bible

However, Michael Adee, national field organizer of More Light, said: "Our church sanctioned slavery, racial segregation, the subordination of women and harsh treatment of divorced persons. In each of those important faith and justice concerns, we looked anew at the Bible and our church law and changed."

Congregations are allowed to conduct blessings for same-sex couples, as long as such blessings are not called marriages. Last year, 58 per cent of presbyteries voted to uphold that interpretation of church practice, according to the PCUSA's media relations office.

To ignore religion in education is 'error of perspective, Pope says

VATICAN CITY (Zenit.org) — To ignore the contribution of religion in education is an "error of perspective" and a "poor service to the truth about man," John Paul II said today when he visited a public university on the outskirts of Rome.

"Suffice it to look at history with objective eyes to realize how important religion has been in the formation of cultures, and how it has suffused with its influence the whole of the human habitat," the Pontiff said, in an address to hundreds of students and professors gathered in the great hall of the University of Rome.

"To ignore this or to deny it is not only an error of perspective, but also a poor service to the truth about man," the Holy Father added.

"Why be afraid to open learning to the culture of faith?" the Pope asked his listeners, among whom was Letizia Moratti, the Italian government's Minister of Education.

"From this osmosis [of faith and culture], has not, perhaps, that humanism emerged of which our Europe is so justifiably proud, which today seeks new cultural and economic goals?" Pope John Paul asked.

John Paul II also described as an "error of perspective" the European Union's rejection of the contribution of communities of believers to the European Convention, which will articulate the future Constitution of the Continent.

On behalf of the Catholic Church, the Pope expressed "the desire to begin a dialogue, which is inspired only by the love of truth and, engaged in with opportune prudence, without excluding anyone — not even those who cultivate the fine goods of the human spirit but still do not recognize the Author of them all, nor those who are opposed to the Church."

Classifieds

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Timothy Christian School, Barrie
A growing, interdenominational Christian School in beautiful Simcoe County - 280 students from JK - Grade 8. TCS is a school actively working out a renewed strategic plan, including plans for a new facility that will meet the needs of learners today and into the future.
Junior and Intermediate openings for September. Strength in music and band could be used in one of the positions.
Forward resume, along with a personal statement of faith to:

Mr. Leo Smit, Principal
Timothy Christian School
49 Ferris Lane
Barrie, Ontario L4M 2Y1
Phone: 705-726-6621
Fax: 705-726-8571
Email: tcs@barint.on.ca

TORONTO, ONT.:
Willowdale Christian School
A school desiring to continue in the reformed tradition invites applications for definite **Primary and Senior teaching positions** effective September 2002. Candidates with a CSTC will be given preference. **Science and Physical Education expertise** will also be appreciated.
Please send resumes including a statement of philosophy of education to:

Ms. Mary Jansen, Principal
Willowdale Christian School
60 Hilda Avenue
North York ON M2M 1V5
Tel: 416-222-1711
Fax: 416-222-1939

WYOMING, ONT.:
Are you keen to challenge students to excel? Do you want to be part of a vibrant, encouraging team of teachers? Are you reedy to work with a supportive school community?
John Knox Christian School
in Wyoming, Ontario has a definite opening for a full time teacher in the **upper grades (six, seven)** for 2002/2003. Send your resume, statement of faith, summary of experience and educational philosophy to:

Mr. Ymko Boersma, Principal
John Knox Christian School
Box 81
4738 Confederation Line
Wyoming, Ontario NON 1T0
Ph: 519-845-3112
email: yboersma@ebtech.net

SMITHERS, B.C.
Bulkley Valley Christian School, located in the scenic Bulkley Valley, has a number of teaching positions available for the 2002-03 school year. The openings include **kindergarten, elementary, middle school, and high school French, science/math, home economics, and industrial arts.**
Bulkley Valley Christian operates two campuses and serves a student body of 475 students. The school is rooted in the Reformed tradition but contains a diverse denominational mix. Applications and inquires are invited; we look forward to talking with you. Please contact:

John Bronsema, Principal
Bulkley Valley Christian School
P.O. Box 3635
Smithers, B.C. V0J 2N0
Phone: 250-847-4238
Fax: 250-847-3564

JARVIS, ONT.:
Jarvis District Christian School has a teaching position available at the **Junior/Intermediate level** for 2002-2003. JDCS is looking for a Grade 6 teacher with a possibility of some rotation into Grades 7 and 8.
Please send your inquiries, letters of application, resume, a brief statement of your philosophy of Christian education and other related information to:

Garry Glasbergen, Principal
Jarvis District Christian School
PO Box 520, Jarvis, ON N0A 1J0
school phone: 519-587-4444
school fax: 519-587-2985
e-mail: jdcs@kwic.com
home: 905-765-7919

BRAMPTON, ONT:
John Knox Christian School, Brampton, Ontario invites applications for a **principal**, beginning August 1, 2002. The school has approximately 315 students from JK to grade 8. We are looking for someone with a solid reformed perspective and the ability to relate to Christians from a variety of denominational backgrounds. Check our web site for more information about our school. Please direct application and/or questions to:

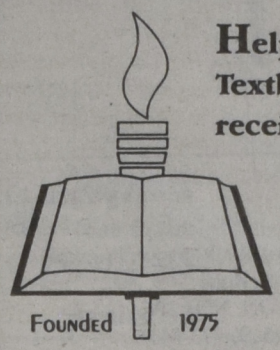
Ms. Deb Douma, chairperson
Administration Search Committee
82 Mclaughlin Road S.
Brampton, ON L6Y 2C7
Tel: 905-874-9713
Fax: 905-451-7604
e-mail: jddouma@rogers.com

Church Anniversary

Sarnia Second Christian Reformed Church will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary during the weekend of April 27/28, 2002. Former members and guests are invited to join us in our celebration of God's faithfulness. Activities include: **Saturday, 27th 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.** children's (12 & under) program of entertainment and food (free); **Saturday, 5:30 p.m.** dinner and formal program at Sarnia Christian School; **Sunday, 28th 10:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.** celebratory worship services with former Pastors participating.
Tickets for Saturday's dinner and program @ $ 15.00/person can be ordered before April 15th from the church office at 1281 Exmouth St, Sarnia ON N7S 2Z8 or by phone: **(519) 383-0620.**

Miscellaneous

CCEF STRENGTHENS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS WITH CHRISTIAN TEXTBOOKS AND TEACHER MANUALS



Help the Foundation make leaders through Christian Textbooks. Send in your tax deductible gift now and receive your receipt from our office immediately.

Christian Schools need Christian Textbooks and Teacher Manuals

Help the Foundation with your gift.

For further information contact our Executive Director Fred Vander Velde.

Canadian Christian Education Foundation Inc.
2621 Cavendish Drive, Burlington, ON L7P 3W6
Tel: 905-336-5619 • Fax: 905-336-2376 • E-mail: ccef@netcom.ca

Our Canadian tax deductible registration number is: BN 11883 0207 RR 0001

Teachers

A Caring Community — Rooted in God's Word

Hamilton District Christian High School
Due to two maternity leaves and possible increases in enrollment, HDCH has two to three openings that include a combination of the following subject areas:

English, Mathematics, Physical Education, and Science
Coaching experience is an asset.

We are looking for energetic, qualified teachers who are passionate about telling the Biblical story within their subject areas. We are committed to a curriculum that expresses a reformed world and life view and is accessible to diverse learning styles. If you wish to join our dynamic Christian learning community, respond in writing to:

Hamilton District Christian High School
George Van Kampen, Principal
92 Glancaster Road
Ancaster, ON L9G 3K9
or e-mail gvankampen@hdch.org

Committed to Jesus Christ — Striving for Academic Excellence

Miscellaneous

ADA REALTY LTD.
2011-137 Ave., Suite 404
Edmonton, AB
T5A 4W2
780-473-8149
Sid Vandermeulen
Contact us first when you think of moving to Edmonton and district.
Home of confidence

Evangelistic Materials in Arabic
Also, in English,
The Bible and Islam
$5.95 Canada / **$4.95** U.S.
And a folder of essays on Understanding the Middle East ($1.50)
Write:
The Back to God Hour
P.O. Box 5070
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8

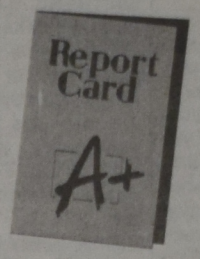
The Living Word
Sermons for reading services.
Contact:
CRC
R. Vander Ploeg, Secr./Treas.
37 Brick Pond Lane
Woodstock, ON N4V 1G1
Phone: (519) 539-2117

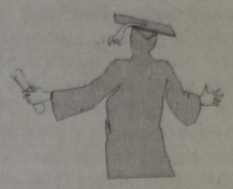
Christian Courier **helps Christians across North America apply their living faith to the business of living. Your donation to Reformed Faith Witness supports this ministry. Along with our thanks for your cheque, we'll send you a tax receipt for donations of $10 (Cdn.) or more.**

Canadian Christian Schools

Christian Courier salutes Christian schools in Canada for keeping the ***flame*** of ***Christ-centred education*** alive — decade after decade. We wish you God's continued blessing in the years ahead.

2002 Canadian Christian School Directory





Immanuel Christian School **Aylmer, ON**

Ms. Marianne Vangoor, Principal
75 Caverly Road
Aylmer, ON N5H 2P6
Phone: (519) 773-8476
Fax: (519) 773-8315
immanuel@amtelecom.net

"Instruction for Christian Service"

Holland Marsh District Christian School

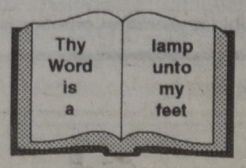
HOLLAND MARSH DISTRICT CHRISTIAN SCHOOL 1943

18955 Dufferin St., R.R. #2
Newmarket, ON L3Y 4V9
Tel: (905) 775-3701
Fax: (905) 775-2395
hmdcs@hmdcs.ca
www.hmdcs.ca
Mr. Rod Berg, Principal

Education in Jesus' Name

Our Vision ... ***a dynamic, educational environment that promotes responsive discipleship.***

John Knox Christian School **Brampton, ON**



Ms. Hilda E. Roukema, Principal
82 McLaughlin Rd. S.
Brampton, ON L6Y 2C7
Phone: (905) 451-3236
Fax: (905) 451-3448
E-mail: hroukema@bramptonjkcs.org
Website: www.bramptonjkcs.org

Excellence in learning

THE SOCIETY FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN SOUTHERN ALBERTA operating:

Immanuel Christian Elementary School
Mr. Henry Ronda, Principal
2010-5 Avenue N., Lethbridge, AB T1H 0N5
Phone: (403) 317-7860
Fax: (403) 317-7862
E-mail: ices@telusplanet.net

Immanuel Christian High School
Mr. Ed DeYoung, Principal
802-6 Avenue N., Lethbridge, AB T1H 0S1
Phone: (403) 328-4783
Fax: (403) 327-6333
E-mail: ichs@telusplanet.net

Taber Christian School
Mrs. Marilyn Visser, Principal
4809-60 Avenue, Taber, AB T1G 1E9
Phone: (403) 223-4550
Fax: (403) 223-4693
E-mail: saders@ta.monarch.net

Our Mission is to provide a Christian environment in which God calls all his children to develop and use their gifts for joyful service in His Kingdom.

Woodland Christian High School, Breslau, ON

* Christ-centred Education
* High Academic standards
* Strong community emphasis
* Flexibility for all student needs
* Fully accredited

Phone: (519) 648-2114
Fax: (519) 648-3402
Website: www.woodland.on.ca

1058 Spitzig Road
R.R. #1, Breslau, ON
N0B 1M0

JOHN KNOX CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

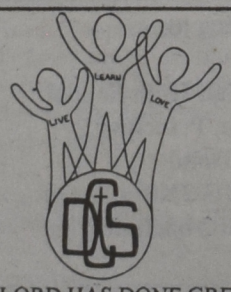
Our mission is to equip children for service in God's world through a Christ-centered education.

For information and a virtual tour visit us at

www.jkcs-oakville.org

JOHN KNOX CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
GRADES JK THROUGH 8
2232 SHERIDAN GARDEN DRIVE
OAKVILLE, ONTARIO L6J 7T1
1Km SOUTH OF THE QEW OFF FORD DRIVE
PHONE: 905.829.8048
EMAIL: office@jkcs-oakville.org

Dunnville Christian School
Dunnville, ON



Mr.Arie Vanderstoel, Principal
RR 1
Dunnville, ON N1A 2W1
Phone: (905) 774-5142
Fax: (905) 774-5519
E-mail: dcs@linetap.com
Web site: www.linetap.com/dcs

THE LORD HAS DONE GREAT THINGS FOR US. *Psalm 126:3a*

Bulkley Valley Christian School **Smithers, BC**

Elementary Campus (K-5)
Mr. John Buikema
Box 2117, Smithers, B.C.
V0J 2N0
Ph: 250-847-9833
Fax: 250-847-0184
bvcselem@telus.net

Secondary Campus (6-12)
Mr. John Bronsema
Box 3635, Smithers, B.C.
V0J 2N0
Ph: 250-847-4238
Fax: 250-847-3564
bvschool@telus.net

"...whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. 10:31b

Calvin Christian School
Hamilton, ON

Mr. Ted J. Postma, Principal
547 West Fifth St.
Hamilton, ON L9C 3P7
Phone: (905) 388-2645
Fax: (905) 388-2769
ccs.edu@sympatico.ca

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path." Psalm 119:105

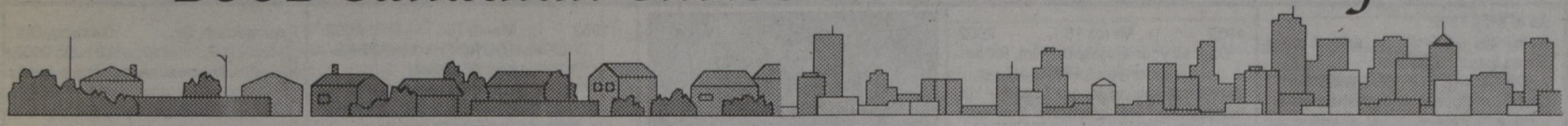
Strathroy Community Christian School
Strathroy, ON

Mr. Henry D. Wiersema, Principal
7880 Walkers Drive, R.R. #2
Strathroy, ON N7G 3H4
Phone: (519) 245-1934
Fax: (519) 245-4424
SCCS@sympatico.ca

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge."

Canadian Christian Schools

2002 Canadian Christian School Directory



Wellandport Christian School **Wellandport, ON**

Mr. William J. Thies, Principal
84008 Wellandport Road
Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0
Phone: (905) 386-6272
Fax: (905) 386-7184
E-mail: wcs@iaw.on.ca

Offering Christian families excellent Christ-centred education and an ethic of caring in a rapidly changing world.

Knox Christian School
"Living for Jesus"

Bowmanville, ON

George Petrusma, Principal
410 Scugog St.
Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K2
Phone: (905)623-5871
Fax: (905)623-8877
E-mail: knoxbowmanville@sympatico.ca
Website: knox.on.ca

Timothy Christian School **Barrie, ON**

Mrs. Brenda Goodnough, Principal
49 Ferris Lane
Barrie, ON L4M 2Y1
Phone: (705) 726-6621
Fax: (705) 726-8571
tcs@barint.on.ca
Website: wwwbarint.on.ca/timothy

"Excellence in education, focused upon the majesty of God."

BEACON Christian Schools

Elementary School
300 Scott Street, St. Catharines
905.937.6302 Karen Gerritsma, Principal

Secondary School
Two O'Malley Drive, St. Catharines
905.937.7411 Ted Harris, Principal
Email admissions@beaconchristian.org
www.beaconchristian.org

"Learning in the Light"

Ottawa Christian School

Henni Helleman
Principal

2191 Benjamin Avenue
Ottawa ON K2A 1P6
Tel/Fax 613.722.5836
henni@ocschool.org
www.ocschool.org

God—The Source, Guide and Goal of all that is...

Pacific Christian School

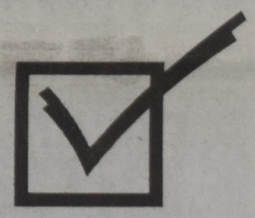
"Equipping Future Generations"

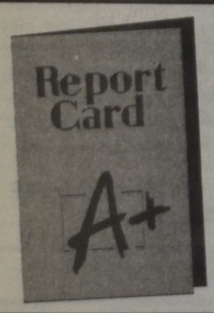
Elementary
Mr Bill Helmus, Principal
671 Agnes St.
Victoria, BC, V8Z 2E7
Ph: 205-479-9365
Fax: 205-479-3685
E-mail: bhelmus@pacificchristian.ca

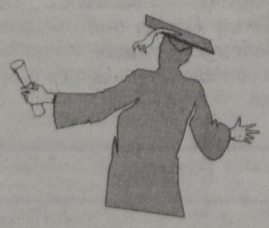
High School
Mr David O'Dell, Principal
654 Agnes St
Victoria, BC, V8Z 2E6
Ph: 205-479-453
Fax: 205-479-3511
E-mail: dodell@pacificchristian.ca

- Dynamic growing school with 900 students PreK-12
- Strong interdenominational flavour with families from over 80 different churches
- Excellent, modern facilities in two buildings on one campus.

Web: www.pacificchristian.ca







Teachers

Beacon Christian Secondary School

invites applications for a possible opening in

Science

to fill a one-year leave of absence beginning in August 2002. Beacon is a great place to start a teaching career. We are an Ontario Alliance Christian high school of just under a hundred students with a loving family atmosphere and a tight-knit instruction team. Qualified Christian teachers are asked to send a letter of application and a resume to:

Ted Harris, Principal
Beacon Christian Secondary School
2 O'Malley Dr., St.Catharines, ON L2N 6N7
Phone: 905-937-7411 Fax: 905-937-1130
e-mail: tharris@beaconchristian.org

Teachers

OPENINGS AT ABBOTSFORD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
for the
2002/03 SCHOOL YEAR

Abbotsford Christian School, a multi-denominational school system serving over 1000 students at 3 campuses, is inviting applications for a number of openings:

Elementary (K-7)
- Music teacher
- Classroom teacher

Secondary (grades 8 - 12)
- Vice Principal, Student Services (student life and student discipline)
- Special Education/Learning Assistance Coordinator
- Art
- English
- French
- Home Economics (textiles)
- Math
- Technical Education (woodworking/construction)

For more information contact one of the principals:

Berta den Haan, Principal
Heritage Campus (K-7)
2884 Mission Hwy.
Abbotsford, BC V2S 3Y2
Phone: 604-850-5342
Fax: 604-859-9995
bdenhaan@uniserve.com

Dave Loewen, Principal
Clayburn Hills Campus (K-7)
3939 Old Clayburn Rd.
Abbotsford, BC V3G 1J9
Phone: 604-850-2694
Fax: 604-850-7075
dloewen@uniserve.com

Ed Noot, Principal
Secondary Campus
35011 Old Clayburn Rd.
Abbotsford, BC V2S 7L7
Phone: 604-850-5342
Fax: 604-859-2240
enoot@uniserve.com

Miscellaneous

Freelance **concert organist**, using traditional and contemporary music, available for church anniversaries, inaugural recitals, church organ fund-raising recitals, weddings, etc. Please contact **Dr. John Vandertuin,** A.R.C.T., A.Mus., B.Mus.(Hons.), M.Mus., D.M.A., **8 Olivetree Rd., Apt. 503, Brantford, ON N3R 5Z2 519-752-5498**

Huntley's Used Christian Books at 114 Lake St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 5X8. We buy and sell used Christian books. Open Tuesday - Saturday 10:00 - 5:00. **905-988-9223 e-mail: books@interpc.ca**

Personals

59 year old Christian gentleman in Alberta seeking Christian woman companionship to enjoy life with. 55-69 years old. I enjoy camping, travelling, fishing, mechanics, etc. I am an active person and very involved in church work.
Please send letters to **File #2727, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd,, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1**

Classifieds

Classified Rates

As of May 1999:
Note: 7% GST will be added to all prices listed below.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

Christian Courier is published on alternate Mondays. Copy deadline for each issue is 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, nine business days prior to publication.

RATES

All personal and family announcements: $16.00 per column inch (pci) + GST (columns are two inches wide). Display advertising re.: businesses and organizations: minimum $18.20 pci + GST, depending on design and frequency.

PHOTOS

There is a processing fee of $25 for the inclusion of a photograph with a personal or family announcement. Photo space is not charged pci, but we reserve the right to determine published photo size. Please note that we cannot use a faxed photo. We need either an original (which we will return) or a downloadable Internet image.

PERSONAL ADS

Christian Courier would be pleased to handle your personal ad in an efficient and discreet manner. The cost to set up a personal file under a unique file number is $35. Ads requesting correspondence with this file are run at $16 pci per insertion. All correspondence is immediately forwarded unopened.

NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS

We offer a $25 one-year subscription to couples whose wedding is announced in *Christian Courier* and to parents who announce the birth of a child in our paper. Please let us know when placing your ad that you want to take advantage of this offer.

SUBMITTING YOUR AD

mail: *Christian Courier*
#4 - 261 Martindale Road
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1
fax: 905-682-8313
email: ccadpromo@aol.com

OTHER INFORMATION

a) *Christian Courier* reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format. And editing style.
b) Please provide us with clear copy. *Christian Courier* is not responsible for any errors due to hand written or phoned-in advertisements.

Wedding

STREEFKERK - DEVRIES

John and Tanny Streefkerk are happy to announce the marriage of their son,

DAVID THEODORE

to

MARCIA GWENDOLYN DEVRIES

daughter of Harry and Joanne DeVries. The wedding will take place, D.V. On, Saturday, March 16, 2002, at 3 p.m. at Roosevelt Park Community Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan.
David and Marcia's address will be: 1422 Calvin Ave. SE, Grand Rapids, MI. 49507

For Rent

Beachfront modern 3 bedroom cottage on **Lake Erie** at Turkey Point. Some weeks still available in June and July 2002. $750.00 week. Call 905-689-6392.

Anniversaries

1952 March 18 2002

"Cast all your anxiety on Him, for he cares for you." 1Peter 5:7

With thanksgiving to our Lord for His faithfulness, we celebrate the 50th Wedding Anniversary of our parents,

ANDRIES and DJOKE BROUWER

Open house Sat. March 23, 2-4 p.m. at Mt. Hamilton Christian Reformed Church, 1411 Upper Wellington St., Hamilton, Ont.
Home address: 159 Glancaster Rd., Ancaster, ON L9G 3K9

1952 2002
Aalten Picton

"Great is Thy Faithfulness"

With thanksgiving and praise to God, we announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents,

JAN and RIEK HEINEN

We pray that the Lord will continue to bless you both with health and happiness. With love from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchilren:
Alida & Cecil Mosselman — Caledonia, Ont..
Scott, Lee-Anne, Jennifer
Eric & Elsie Heinen — Grimsby, Ont.
Michael, Paul, Wayne, Glenn
Diane & Bernard Prinzen — Bloomfield, Ont.
David & Angela (Daniel, Joshua), Philip, Stephen, Rachel
Geraldine & Henry Nyman — Waterdown, Ont.
Mark, Craig, Trevor
Nancy & Warren Lee — Burlington, Ont.
Michael, Melissa
We welcome you to celebrate this joyous occasion with us at an Open House on March 16, 2002 from 2:00-4:30 p.m. at the Elks Hall in Picton. Best wishes only.
Home address: RR#1, Picton, ON K0K 2T0

1952 March 26 2002

"Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in his ways." (Ps.128:l)

With praise and thanks to God for His faithfulness, we wish to announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents

WALTER and ROSE PIERSMA
(nee Buma)

on March 26, 2002 D.V. Congratulations and may the Lord continue to bless you. We love you.
From your family:
Betty & Cor Adema — Georgetown, Ont. .
Dave, Mark, Joe, Ben
Harry & Hilda Piersma — Cobourg, Ont.
Michael & Shirley, Kristina, Jeffrey, Carolyn
Stan & Jane Piersma — Oshawa, Ont.
Jennifer, Cara, Stephanie,
Alice & John Daling — Peterborough, Ont.
Jason & Michelle, Russell, Alison, Elizabeth, Katherine
Evelyn & Dick Zandstra — Trenton, Ont.
Carey & Rex, Rosalee, Derek
Roy & Henrietta Piersma — Omemee, Ont.
Natasha, Walter, Meaghan
and three great grandchildren: Quinten, Lainah & Mason.
An open house will be held at the Maranatha CRC Church on Sat. March 23 from 2-4 p.m. Best wishes only!
Home address: 144 Queen St. Unit 603, Bowmanville, ON LIC 1M9.

Congratulations to Clarence & Jane Dekker on their 50th wedding anniversary.

1952 March 18 2002

"Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain." Ps 127:1a

With thankfulness to God, we are happy to announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents,

CLARENCE and JANE DEKKER
(nee Straatsma)

We pray that God will continue to bless you and grant you many more years of happiness and health together.
Love and congratulations from:
Jack & Lynda Dekker — Chatham
Janice, Krista, Angela
Amy & George Hart — Newmarket
Jennifer and Ray, Heidi and Andrew, Laura, Katie
Fred & Glenda Vriesema — Wyoming
Joshua and Roberta, (Eric and Karryne), Charles and Julie, (Michael), Dan, Janelle
Gordon Dekker — Vineland
Barb & Richard VanderDeen — Strathroy
Michael, Karen, Sarah, Andrea, David
Ben & Sandy Dekker — Wyoming
Jessica, Samantha, Amelia, Katie, Beth
We invite one and all to an Open House to be held at Chatham Christian School, 475 Keil Dr. S, Chatham on Saturday, March 16, from 2:00 til 4:00 p.m .Best Wishes only please!
Home address: 149 Chippewa Dr., Chatham ON N7M 2B3
(phone 519-352-0991)

Winterswijk March 11 Woodstock
1952 2002

Psalm 121

With thankfulness to God, we wish to announce the 50th Wedding Anniversary of our dear parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents,

JOHN and DINIE GREVERS
(nee Ruessink)

We thank the Lord for His care and provision over the past years and pray forHis continued blessings and joy in the future. Much love from us all:
Mary Grevers & Al
Henry & MaryLou Grevers
Jennie & Des, Jay & Dori (Brennan)
Ryan, Brandon, Lindsay.
Grace & Harry Schipper
Erica, Laura, Darryl, Anita.
Bernice & Tim Benturn
Timothy, Heidi, Denise, Emily.
Ingrid & Bill Los
Robin, Rosanna, Derek, Megan, Janelle.
Address: 28-928 Lorene Street, Woodstock, ON N4S 5N8.

1952 March 10 2002

WILF and DOROTHY MARTENS
(nee Wiersma)

"The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them." (Psalm 34:7)

With thankfulness to God, we are pleased to announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our dear parents and grandparents and we wish them many more years together.
Ralph & Jan Martens — Stoney Creek, Ont.
Randy Martens — Stoney Creek, Ont.
John Martens & Mercedes Henrich Sala (fiancee) — Hamilton, Ont.
Mary Martens — Richmond Hill, Ont.
Florence & Brian VanLeeuwen — Nanticoke, Ont.
Home address: 20 Cedar Street, P. 0. Box 362, Hagersville, ON NOA 1HO

1952 March 31 2002

With thankfulness to God
PETER and CHRISTINA KUIPER
hope to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary with a Open House on Saturday, March 30, 2002 from 2-5 p.m.
We invite you to join us and our family at: John Knox Christian School, 82 Mclaughlin Rd. S., Brampton, Ont.

Lochem Philippians 1:27 Chatham
1952 February 26 2002

With great joy and gratitude to God, we are happy to announce the 50th anniversary of our loving parents and grandparents:

HENK and STIEN JANSEN
(nee Wissink)

With love:
Allard (Ruth)
Wilma
Rita & George
Michael, Christina, Jodi
Liz & Bill
Steven, Matthew, Stacie
We invite you to celebrate with us at an Open House on March 9th,D.V., in the First C.R.C. Fellowship Hall (Tweedsmuir Ave.E.) from 2-4 p.m. Best wishes only please! Home Address: 175 Park Lane, Chatham, ON N7M 4Y6

Birthday

The family of

Matthys Maas

congratulates him on his 85th birthday D.V. March 12,2002. From his wife, Nellie, and his children,
Evelyn & Ed
Mary & Bill
Gary & Mary
Bruce (†) & Ada
Tex & Dorothy
John & Alice
Arend & Louise
along with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. We thank God for the blessing he is to us.
Home Address: HCH - Hope Tower, 408-7900 McLaughlin Rd S, Brampton, ON L6Y 5A7

To advertise in *Christian Courier*, call our toll-free number: 1-800-969-4838.

Obituaries

Appingedam, Gr. Grimsby, Ont.
* 3 Oct 1907 - † 21 Jan 2002

It is with deep sadness that the family of

JOHANNA WINTER
(nee Jager)

announces her passing from this life in her 95tn year. It is with joy that we celebrate the gift of eternal life that God has now granted her. She was the dearly loved wife for 65 years of Henry Winter (†1999), and the cherished mother of:
Peter & Nell Winter
Bé Winter (with the Lord)
Grace & Hank Rumph
Jake & Alice Winter
Ann & John Knier
Bé Winter (with the Lord)
Ben & Julie Winter
Henry & Emma Winter
John & Jacomina Winter
Reynold & Cathy Winter
Gerda & Brian van Staalduinen
Ellen & John Hunse and
Joanne & Ted Parker.
42 grandchildren and 59 great-grandchildren will fondly remember her. 4 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild also predeceased her.
Following interment, a memorial service was held on January 24, 2002, at the Hope Christian Reformed Church in Brantford. Grandson Harold Winter, Rev. Jeff Jansen, and Rev. George VanArragon, officiated.

Soli Deo Gloria

Correspondence address:
Pete Winter, 336 Henry St. Brantford, ON N3S 7R5

In Loving Memory,

"It is by grace you are saved, through faith... it is the the gift of God."
(Eph. 2:8-9)

Peacefully at McMaster Medical Centre on Friday Dec 14,2001, the Lord took home,

SIDNEY REITSMA

beloved husband of Diny Reitsma. Survived by his sisters Betty Tigchelaar and Ann Tigchelaar. Predeceaced by his brothers Thys and Bill. Also survived by several nieces and nephews. Funeral services were held at Hamilton First Christian Reformed Church, on Monday Dec. 17,2001. Rev. Andrew Zantingh officiated.
Home address: 130-8th Concession E, RR1Freelton, Ont L0R 1K0.

Birthday

With joy and thanksgiving to God, we look forward to celebrating the 85th birthday on March 24, 2002, of our mother, grandmother and great-grand mother,

Coby (Kuiper) Karreman

We thank God for your constant love and pray that He may continue to bless you in the coming years. With love from your family:
Christina & Gerald Pleizier
Jonathan, Naomi
Elske Kuiper
Al & Ghislaine Kuiper
Nick
Cathy & Dirk Van Starkenburg
Sharon & Steve (Logan), Heather & Paul, Maria, Sandra
Elizabeth Kuiper
Cory
Address: 221-220 Viewmount Dr. Nepean, ON K2E 7M5

Classifieds

Teachers

OTTAWA, ONT.:
Ottawa Christian School is interested in applications from qualified, Christian teachers with a passion for teaching children from a Christian perspective. Openings are for September 2002 due to growth and restructuring. We are looking for a **French specialist** position for **grades five to eight, a primary** position, a **junior** position, and an **intermediate** position. A **combination** of **French** and **inter- mediate** and /or **junior** positions is possible. We have 236 students from junior kindergarten to grade eight and are in the exciting stage of planning for growth in a multi denominational community. Please submit your resume to:

Mrs. Helleman, Principal
Ottawa Christian School
2191 Benjamin Ave
Ottawa, Ont. K2A 1P6
or fax to 1-613-722-5836 or
e-mail: principal@ocschool.org

FRUITLAND, SMITHVILLE, ONT.:
The Niagara Association for Christian Education operating John Knox MemorialChristian School in **Fruitland** and Covenant Christian School in **Smithville** is seeking applicants for possible **part-time Music** positions beginning September 2002. These positions include teaching music in Grades 4 through 8. Experience in teaching band would be an asset. Send inquiries or letters of application by April 1, 2002 to:

Rick Zwiers
John Knox Memorial Chr Sch
795 Highway #8
Fruitland, ON L8E 5J3
Phone: 905-643-2460
Fax: 905-643-5875
E-mail: jkmcs@look.ca

CAMBRIDGE, ONT.:
Cambridge Christian School invites applications, for the following positions: **Primary** Teacher (definite, one year position), **Junior/Intermediate** Teacher (possible position); experience and expertise in Computers and Phys. Ed., would be considered assets, Please send a Letter of Application and Resume to:,

Andy Vander Ploeg, Principal,
Cambridge Christian School,
229 Myers Road,,
Cambridge, ON N1R 7H3,
Phone: 519-623-2261
Fax: 519-623-4042
Application deadline is April 2, 2002

WELLANDPORT, ONT.:
Wellandport Christian School invites applications from qualified teachers for the following possible openings:

- primary division
- junior division
- intermediate division
- special education (50%)

Please forward your resume to :

Wm. Thies, Principal
Wellandport Christian School
Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0
Phone: 905-386-6272
Fax: 905-386-7184
E-mail: wcs@law.on.ca

BOWMANVILLE, ONT.:
We are looking for people who live their lives with an atomsphere of Christian love and concern, who enjoy being part of an energetic, professional, and fun team of teachers, and who are interested in providing quality Christian education to our youth. We have definite openings due to growth and maternity leaves. If you are qualified to teach at the **elementary level**, we encourage you consider **Knox Christian School** in **Bowmanville**. An information package about our school is available upon request. Interests in music, sports, art, and/or computers are noticed and appreciated. Please forward your letter of application, resume, philosophy of education, and references immediately to:

George Petrusma, principal
Knox Christian School
410 Scugog Street
Bowmanville, Ontario L1C 3K2
Phone: 905-623-5871
Fax: 905-623-8877
E-mail:
knox.bowmanville@sympatico.ca

CALGARY, ALTA.:
Calgary Christian School is accepting applications for three positions for the 2002 - 2003 school year: a FTE **High School English** teacher; a .75 FTE **Middle School French** teacher; and a .65 FTE **Gr. 4-6 French** teacher. Please send resume, statement of faith and philosophy to:

Anita Veeneman, K-6 Principal,
2839 - 49 St SW,
Calgary, AB T3E 3X9
Fax 242-6682
E-mail: aveeneman@CSCE.net.
Or send to
John Messelink, HS Principal,
5029 -26 Ave. SW,
Calgary AB T3E 0R5
Fax: 403-686-1281
E-mail: jmesselink@CSCE.net.

REXDALE, ONT.:
Timothy Christian School, Rexdale, Ontario has possible teaching positions for the 2002-2003 school year. Our school of 189 students and 14 staff members was esablished in 1958 and is situated in the northwest suburb of Toronto, known as Rexdale. If you are interested in being part of a team of dedicated teachers supported by a committed Christian community, we invite you to apply. We look forward to assisting you to use your talents and gifts as a teacher in our school as we prepare God's children for service in His Kingdom. Please send resumes or direct inquiries to:

Principal
Timothy Christian School
28 Elmhurst Drive
Rexdale, Ontario M9W 2J5
Phone: 416-741-5770
Fax: 416-741-3359
E-mail:
timothychristian@rogers.com

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See us at: **www.bedandbreakfast.nl**

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Miscellaneous

Tax Tips
Can students claim moving expenses?

(NC)—Full-time students can claim moving expenses, if they move at least 40 kilometres closer to school. If you go home to work for the summer, you can claim moving expenses against your summer income. When you move back to school, you can only claim them against scholarships, awards, or bursaries. To find out about tax preparation software with money-saving tax tips, visit www.quicktax.ca

- News Canada

Tax Tips
Can I expedite my GST claim?

(NC)—GST/HST credit payments are based upon your previous year's income tax return. The birth of a child or a change in your marital status will affect your GST/HST credit, but those can take up to 18 months to appear. You can speed up your GST Credit Claim by having all family members file tax returns at the same time. To find out about tax preparation software with money-saving tax tips, visit www.quicktax.ca

- News Canada

Teachers

Calvin Christian School, a Reformed Christian School of 430 students in Grades SK- 8, with a dedicated staff, a strong supporting community and a new building, is accepting applications from Christian teachers for possible full-time and part-time openings at the junior and intermediate levels.
Please forward a resume along with a brief autobiography containing your statement of faith and your philosophy of Christian education to:

Ted Postma, Principal
Calvin Christian School
547 West 5th St.
Hamilton, ON L9C 3P7
Phone: 905-388-2645 Fax: 905-388-2769
E-mail: ccs.edu@sympatico.ca

Miscellaneous

Summer job helps student launch film career

(NC)—Seventeen-year-old Jared Raab is shooting towards a career in film working at PowerHouse Digital Video in Peterborough, a job he got with help from Ontario Summer Jobs, 2001. Raab started working with the production company as a co-op student and landed a summer job through his dedication and interest in the film industry.

"What's great about this job is that I can learn a number of things simultaneously. I do everything from shooting interviews to editing videos to making copies for customers," Raab said.

"Ontario Summer Jobs allows us to hire summer students to help with our workload," said Stephen Rose, owner of PowerHouse Digital Video.

Information on summer jobs is available at the Ministry of Training, Colleges and University's web site at or the Ontario government's youthjobs.gov.on.ca site, and through the Training and JobGrow Hotline at 1-888-JOBGROW or in Toronto (416) 326-5656.

- News Canada

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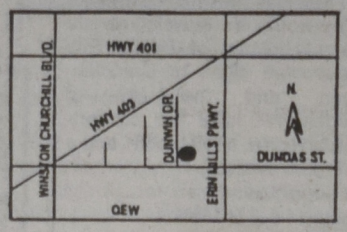

Mississauga, Dundas St. — 2 Blocks W. of Erin Mills Parkway (905) 828-9511

Burlington, Ontario

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This award-winning Senior Citizen Homes is located close to Burlington Christian Reformed Church and Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church, with audio hook-up for the Sunday services in every apartment from both churches and a weekly evening video church service presentation.

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Rosanne van der Woerd, 3260 New Street
Burlington, ON L7N 3L4 905-639-9054

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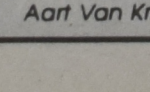
write: Christian Reformed Extension Fund, 45 Harriet St., Toronto, ON M4L 2G1
fax: 416-465-6367



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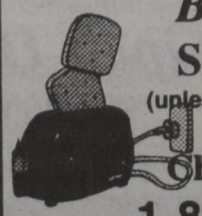

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Events/Advertising

Calendar of Events

Items appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission-free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is $7.50 per line, or $1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion.

March 12 Ministers' Conference, Redeemer University College, **Ancaster**, Ont. See ad in this issue.
March 30 **Annual Easter Concert**, Pro Musica Choir, Mountainview CRC, **Grimsby**, Ont.
April 6 **Spring Concert of Praise**, Ontario Christian Music Assembly, Leendert Kooij director, Andre Knevel organ, St.George's Anglican Church, **Guelph,** 7:30 p.m. Tickets $10, children under 12-free. **Call 519-821-9384.**
April 13 **Spring Concert of Praise**, Ontario Christian Music Assembly, Leendert Kooij director, Andre Knevel organ, King St. United Church, **Trenton**, 7:30 p.m. Tickets $10, children under 12–free. **Call 613-392-3020.**
April 20 **Spring Concert of Praise**, Ontario Christian Music Assembly, Leendert Kooij director, Andre Knevel organ, **Springdale** Christian Ref. Church, 7:30 p.m. Tickets $10, children under 12–free. **Call 905-775-2230.**
April 20 **Festival of Praise concert**, Centennial Hall, 550 Wellington St., **London**, Ont. $ 13. **519-637-4357**
April 20 Of Spring and God's Creation, **Pro Musica Choir**, Port Nelson United Church, 3132 South Drive, **Burlington**, Ont. 8 p.m. Adults $12, Seniors/Students $10, Families $30, $2 off in advance. Ian Sadler, conductor, Brent Fifield organ, Yifan Shi, piano, Sheila Xia, violin. Includes Sonatina for Violin and Piano by Peter Koning, Madrigals, sacred selections by Purcell, Bissell, Sirett & Rutter. **Call 905-632-1347.**
April 21 Calgary 1st CRC 50th Anniv. Former members welcome. For info. 403-243-2244 See ad in this issue.
April 27 **Redeemer** University College **Choir** will be in concert at the **Wallaceburg** CRC 7:30 p.m. Freewill offering.
May 3-4 Conference on Biblical Evangelism, **Jordan Stn.** See ad in this issue.
May 4 Chapel Singers, West Lincoln Hospital Benefit Concert, Mountainview CRC, **Grimsby,** Ont.
May 4 Cephas CRC, **Peterborough, Ont.** 50th Anniv. Dinner May 4, Special Services May 5. See ad.
June 1-2 Williamsburg CRC 50th anniversary, **Williamsburg**, Ont. See ad in this issue.

Jordan Gospel Outreach presents:

A Reformed Conference on Biblical Evangelism

Guest Speakers: Rev. Maurice Roberts and Dr. Joel Beeke
Topics: A Return to the Bible, Puritan Evangelism, Revival
Held at: **Heritage Reformed Congregation**
4171 15th Street, Jordan Station
First Topic - Friday evening, May 3 - 7:30 p.m.
Second Topic - Saturday morning, May 4 - 10:00 a.m.
Third Topic - Saturday afternoon, May 4 - 1:00 p.m.
For information and to register contact Renee @ **905-688-8800** or Fax: **905-688-8808** or e-mail us at **hrcconf@hotmail.com**. Although there is *no* charge, seats must be reserved by April 4.
"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord of Hosts." Zech. 4:6

CRC Williamsburg

The CRC of Williamsburg, Ontario, will be celebrating its **50th anniversary** on **June 1 & 2, 2002**, D.V.
We plan to have an Open House on **Sat.**, **June 1**, from **10-4** with a supper from **5-7,** followed by a program of fun and remembering.
Special Worship Services will be held on **Sunday** at **9:30 a.m.** and **7 p.m.** with former pastors participating.
All friends and former members are kindly invited to join us in our celebration. For more information contact:
Anjo Norg, R.R. 2, Williamsburg, ON K0C 2H0
Phone: 613-448-1555, e-mail: norgk@3web.net

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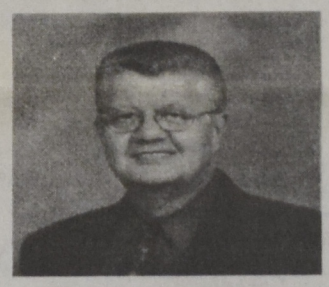


We at Dodsworth & Brown Funeral Homes are pleased to announce that Henry Sieders has joined our staff. Henry is a long time resident of Burlington and has served the Burlington, Hamilton and Ancaster communities for over 30 years. Henry is the former owner of the Southhall-Sieders Funeral Home and Henry Sieders Funeral Home, both of which were established Funeral Homes serving the Burlington, Hamilton and Ancaster area. Henry can be contacted at any of our chapels.

Burlington Chapel
2241 New Street
Burlington, Ontario
905•637•5233

Robinson Chapel
15 West Ave. N.,
Hamilton, Ontario
905•522•2496

Ancaster Chapel
378 Wilson Street
Ancaster, Ontario
905•648•3852

2002 Ministers' Conference

Sponsored by Redeemer University College

Dr. Marva J. Dawn on "Worship In These Confusing Times"

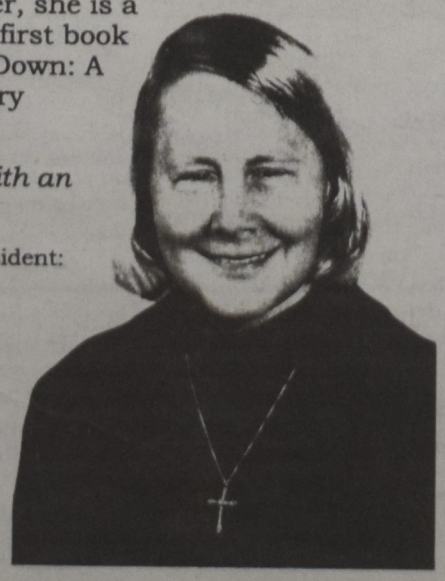
Dr. Dawn is a Teaching Fellow at Regent College and holds an appointment at the Vancouver(WA)-based "Christians Equipped for Ministry". A theologian, author and lecturer, she is a noted expert on worship and the church. Her first book on worship, "Reaching Out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for the Turn-of-the Century Culture", was published in 1995.

The conference is open to pastors and others with an interest in worship.

Pre-registration requested. Contact the Office of the President: 877-779-0913 or locally, 905-648-2131 ext 4208

Redeemer University College
2002 Ministers' Conference
Tuesday, March 12
Registration: 9:30 - 10:00
Conference fee of $20 for the day includes lunch.

REDEEMER University College



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News analysis

New Bible translation creates division among evangelicals

Harry der Nederlanden

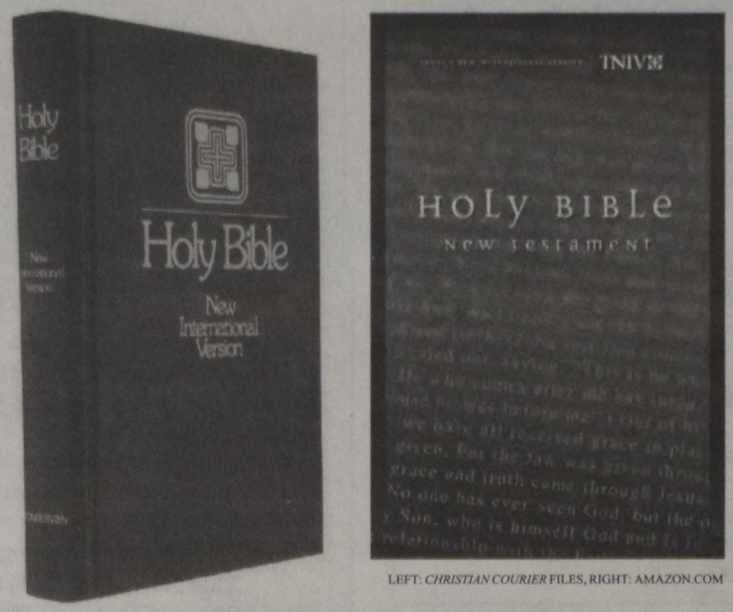
ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — The publication of a new Bible translation has raised a furor among conservative scholars. This is not, however, an instance of conservatives versus liberals. There are conservatives on both sides of the controversy. Bible translations are a dime a dozen. So why is this one raising such a ruckus in evangelical circles?

'Politically-correct' version

It involves a revision of the New International Version (NIV), which has become the most respected and most used Bible among orthodox churches. In late January, Zondervan and the International Bible Society (IBS) announced that Today's New International Version (TNIV) would be ready in 2005, but copies of the New Testament have already been made available. It drew strong protests even before it had been seen.

Critics immediately labeled it a "politically-correct" version because it uses inclusive language wherever possible to provide a more "gender accurate" translation. Defenders point out that the changes amount to only seven per cent of the 1984 NIV, and only two per cent involve revisions pertaining to gender. Shortly after the first copies of the New Testament began to circulate, however, the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood published a critique on its website citing numerous passages, many involving gender, calling some of them "absolute mistranslations." The Council is a conservative group based in Kentucky devoted to preserving gender-specific language and gender differences.

Its executive director, Randy Stinson said, "We're really against what they've done here and what they say is that there are instances where singular words are made plural and instances where words are translated other than the way they should be in order to be more gender sensitive."



LEFT: *CHRISTIAN COURIER* FILES, RIGHT: AMAZON.COM

The New International Version (l.) and Today's New International Version (r.).

Meaning of relationship lost

Three examples provided on the website as mistranslations are:

- Revelation 3:20: "I will come and eat with them, and they with me."

"The removal of 'him' and 'he' completely drains the passage of the individual nature of the relationship between a person and Christ," counters the Council, noting that the TNIV has "many instances where the singular generic 'he' is replaced with the plural 'they' or 'them.'"

- John 11:25, in which Jesus is translated as saying: "Anyone who believes in me will live, even though they die."

The Council noted: "Not only does this convolute the personal nature of the relationship between a person and Christ, but it betrays the fact that Jesus himself used the generic 'he' even though he was speaking to a woman (Martha)."

— Acts 20:30: "From your own number some will arise."

The Council argued: "This is problematic because the Greek word 'aner' is translated 'some,' when this is a specific word that can only mean men. Not only is this a mistranslation, but it communicates the idea that the passage may also refer to women who would 'arise.' Since this passage refers to the elders, that would not be the case. Even if one affirms that there actually could have been women elders, it is still not appropriate to change the translation to reflect this belief."

Dangerous, irresponsible

"Unnecessarily changing the words of the biblical text in order to accommodate those who think certain phrases are offensive is dangerous and irresponsible," asserted Stinson. "The question one must ask is 'What will be next?'"

The Zondervan website countered: "The [Committee on Bible Translation for the TNIV and NIV] have devoted their lives to reaching the world with the Good News of the Bible. Accusations that these godly servants have been influenced by feminism or political correctness are false.

"Generic language is used where the meaning of the text was intended to include both men and women. For example, 'sons of God' becomes 'children of God,' and 'brothers' becomes 'brothers and sisters' when it is clear the original text never intended any specific gender reference."

Larry Lincoln, communications director for the International Bible Society, noted that the TNIV does not alter direct masculine references to God or Jesus, and that they will continue to publish the NIV without changes or updates, and continue to promote the NIV earnestly.

As the critics enlisted the support of prominent evangelical theologians against the TNIV, Zondervan reminded us that the translation committee "includes renowned, conservative linguists and biblical scholars from the most trusted institutions in the world. They come from a variety of denominational affiliations and theological backgrounds."

Explaining passionate responses to new version

Zondervan sought to explain the controversy by citing history: "The passion with which people from all sides are responding to TNIV is part of the normal discourse in updating translations for the next generation. Perhaps the most classic example is the furor that broke out in 1611 over the King James Version (KJV). People were outraged that the older English translations would be supplanted. Nine years after its publication, the Pilgrims still refused to take copies of the KJV on board the Mayflower, the Geneva Bible being their version of choice for the Plymouth Colony."

When it issued the TNIV, IBS noted, "There is room for differences of opinion on the translation complexities of Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic. However, differences of opinion on linguistic issues should not be confused with feminist or a social agenda."

Criticism of the TNIV was so vehement and immediate because those opposed to any attempt to soften the use of the masculine for the generically human thought they had won an agreement from Zondervan and IBS that they would not tamper with the NIV.

In 1997 *World* magazine reported that a gender neutral version of the NIV published in England would also be released in North America. This raised a storm of protest. In response, the IBS issued a statement saying it would "forego all plans" to revise the NIV translation. The IBS and representatives from Zondervan met with a group of the critics and together drew up a page of suggested translation guidelines that became known as *The Colorado Springs Guidelines*. So, the critics thought the matter had been laid to rest.

However, in January of this year, the IBS withdrew its endorsement of the *Guidelines* for translation of gender-related language in Scripture. It said that although it agreed with the philosophical principles contained in that document, upon further consideration, it found the more specific outworking of these principles to be "too restrictive to facilitate the most accurate possible text in contemporary English idiom."

For the critique see **www.cbmw.org** and for Zondervan's defense see **www.tniv.info**.

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News Digest

'Are you still alive?'

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Religion Today) — Bill Gaither is alive and well, or so he announced at a two-day celebration of gospel music at the Russell Senate Office Building in Washington, D.C. The Gaither Vocal Band performed to an enthusiastic, diverse crowd at the February event.

Bill Gaither brought some levity to the proceedings, recounting a recent encounter with a young boy at an airport. Gaither quoted the youth's surprised question upon being introduced to the singer for the first time: "'Bill Gaither? Are you still alive? You're in our hymnal at church. There's only dead people in that hymnal.'"

The group closed its performance with a flawless rendition of the American national anthem that won over the 20-somethings in the audience, reports Religion Today.

Camel beauty contest

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates (*Khaleej Times*) — The United Arab Emirates has staged its first camel beauty contest. The National Consultative Council in Abu Dhabi organized the contest to show the nation's love for the animal.

The pageant offered the equivalent of $26,871 (U.S.) prize money. Categories included best adult, best under-two- year-old and best stud.

The *Khaleej Times* quoted National Consultative Council spokesman Faraj bin Hamouda as saying the camel is the best companion his countrymen have, and that local young people need to value camels more.

Hurling haggis

CALGARY (CP) — In a tradition as strange as haggis itself, five of these sheep's stomach meat puddings were launched slingshot-style across Calgary's Bow River recently to celebrate the birthday of Scottish poet Robert Burns. Accompanied by a blast of bagpipes, with more than 100 curious spectators looking on, butcher Gordon Sinclair fired the frozen "haggi" across the river. But only one skidded across the ice and made it to the opposite shore.

"Robbie Burns would have been proud," Sinclair boasted. "That was much better than last year, when we didn't get any across." The tradition of the "haggis hurl" stems from a time when Scottish women would toss lunch across streams to their working husbands.